



Historical Sociology of State Formation in the Horn of Africa

Genesis, Trajectories, Processes,
Routes and Consequences

Redie Bereketeab

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ISBN 978-3-031-24161-1 ISBN 978-3-031-24162-8 (eBook)
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-24162-8>

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The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

PREFACE

This book is about the historical sociology of state formation in the Horn of Africa (HOA). It analyses and examines the genesis, trajectories, processes, routes and consequences of the complex evolution of state formation in the region. To that end, the book employs three analytical and explanatory models in explaining the complicated and arduous process of state formation in the HOA: proto-state, colonial and national liberation. These models heuristically and innovatively enable us to understand, interpret and analyse state formation in the HOA. While the proto-state model explicates an indigenous historical process of state formation in Ethiopia, the colonial model refers to an externally designed and imposed process of state formation. The national liberation model refers to a specific form of state formation conducted under a movement and ideology of—and within an environment of—national liberation. The distinct significance of these models is that collectively they have the power to a sufficient degree analyse state formation in the region. They are also unique in that they have never been employed as aggregate analytical and explicative instruments to address the predicament of state formation in the HOA.

The HOA is the region on the African continent that is most susceptible to conflict. The region suffers from convoluted and interwoven pathologies. These include intra-state and interstate conflicts; state crisis; underdevelopment; poverty; unemployment; mass migration; environmental degradation; drought and famine; external intervention and

geopolitical involvement; deficiency of democratic governance; authoritarianism; mismanagement of diversity; and multiplicity of identities. The root causes of the pathologies are multiple and complex, but the one that stands out is the nature and structure of the state.

The state is perceived to be the source as well as the remedy of the pathologies. While the contemporary nature and structure of the state undergird the pervasive conflicts, proper and complete state formation would remedy many of the conflicts of the region. Ultimately, state formation concerns societal construction, which in a broader sense stands at the centre of the problem the HOA faces. Societal construction is primarily conceptualised, in technical terms, as state formation and nation formation. At its most extreme, the status of the state and the nation in the HOA and in Africa in general are defined as weak, fragile, collapsed and absent. Conversely, this also demonstrates that the process of state formation in the HOA is still in a process of gestation and under construction.

The incompleteness of the process of state formation to a great extent explains the prevalence of the pathologies afflicting the HOA. It is also worth noting that the processes, routes and genesis of state formation in the HOA vary, justifying the employment of the three models. Generally speaking, three factors render the HOA distinctive: (1) throughout the postcolonial era, it has been the most conflict-afflicted region on the continent; (2) it has withstood the brunt of grave geopolitical interventions; and (3) it is perhaps the only region on the continent that has experienced the emergence of new states from existing states as an outcome of national liberation struggles.

The reason why the nature and structures of the state are perceived as problematic in the HOA is to be found in states' failure to tackle the representativeness of, inclusion, identification with, participation in and ownership of the state of and by all citizens. Often, the state lacks those qualities. These are essential qualities and requirements in multiethnic, multilingual, multifaith and multicultural societies. The current structure and nature of the state in the HOA are perceived as exclusionary, narrow in its representation, serving the interests of the few and dominated by certain groups and personalities.

Social science is still struggling to find a formula of state formation that commands universal validity and applicability. The general literature of state formation is fraught with discord and controversy, especially with reference to the universality of existing state models. The dominant

discourse accepts that the epistemic and ontological origin of the state is in Europe. The question, then, is whether the original Euro-centric societal setting is amenable for replication in non-European societal settings.

The narrow and orthodox conception of the genesis of the state has given rise to the widely held conception that Africa cannot imitate European state formation. Accordingly, political entities in Africa are often considered as an artificial imposition and a mismatch between the political organisation (state) and society. It is often proposed that the solution lies in the resolution of the mismatch, leading to recommendations that Africans should go back to their roots. Although there is no doubt that the mismatch explains state-society conflict, it is not clear where the source of this conflict comes from or if it is possible to simply extricate what has been grafted onto it over history.

This book acknowledges the double heritage that characterises post-colonial states in the HOA. The current states in the HOA contain in their body politic dialectically intertwined precolonial and colonial elements. Even the proto-state, through modernisation endeavours, has incorporated aspects of the European state model. The book contends that the political entities in the HOA are states, but perhaps of a different genre, not copycats of the European model.

At the root of the controversy revolving around the form of state in the HOA concerns definition. The definition of the state is broached from diverse theoretical and conceptual dimensions, the main ones being functionalist and institutionalist conceptions. The functionalist conception of the state derives from normatively identified functions a state is supposed to perform. Whether those normative functions prevail or not determines the existence of the state. The institutionalist conception, however, stems from how strong state institutions are, and whether they are capable of replacing and preventing personalised polity.

Two more dimensions of state formation are perceptions of the state as processual and evolutionary, and continuum; and the perception of historical sociology. The first conceptualises state formation as a long process that cuts across time (past, present and future), governed by a variety of rhythms, scopes and paces. The second perception understands state formation through the lens of the historical and sociological transformation of society. This transformation is dictated by and embedded in various stages, experiences, setbacks, tribulations and achievements that

cumulatively determine the state's formation, endowing it with its own specificity and characteristics.

In conclusion, the project of state formation is the essence of peace, security, stability and development in the HOA. As such, it needs to be taken seriously. It is also essential to take seriously the historical diversity, trajectories and specificities of the countries in which the model of state formation applicable to each one takes account of those factors. From this derives the rationale behind the three models, which reflect the historical specificities of the HOA.

Uppsala, Sweden
November 2022

Redie Bereketeab

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ABBREVIATIONS

ANDM	Amhara National Democratic Movement
AU	African Union
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
CS	Civil Society
ENLM	Eritrean National Liberation Movement
EPLF	Eritrean People's Liberation Front
EPRDF	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front
EPRP	Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party
HDI	Human Development Index
HOA	Horn of Africa
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LM	Liberation Movement
MEISON	Mela Ethiopia Socialist Neqenaqe (All Ethiopian Socialist Movement)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NCP	National Congress Party
NDF	Northeast Frontier District
NLM	National Liberation Movement
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OPDO	Oromo People's Democratic Organisation
PDRE	People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
PMAC	Provisional Military Administrative Council
R2P	Responsibility to Protect

SEPDEF	Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Front
SNM	Somali National Movement
SNNPR	Southern Nations, Nationalities and People's Region
SPLM	Sudan People's Liberation Movement
SSLM	Southern Sudan Liberation Movement
TFG	Transitional Federal Government
TPLF	Tigray People's Liberation Front
UIC	Union of Islamic Courts
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
USA	United State of America
WB	World Bank
WPE	Workers Party of Ethiopia
WTO	World Trade Organisation
WWII	World War II

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Introduction: Challenges of State Formation

INTRODUCTION

The central objective of the book is to examine the historical sociology of state formation in the Horn of Africa (HOA). It examines interrelated trajectories, processes, routes and consequences, and explains briefly the genesis, trajectory, contours, anatomies, routes and metamorphoses of state. Its focus is on the routes and models of state formation, rather than on countries themselves. The HOA countries, based on the routes and models of state formation, are clustered in three cases in this book. Accordingly, we identify:

1. **The proto-state formation model** Ethiopia represents. Ethiopia has a unique position in Africa. It has never been colonised and, therefore, is perceived to have followed an indigenous state formation process, often associated with the first stage of state formation. Since Ethiopia represents only itself this book treats it as a case in itself.
2. **The colonial model** and route of state formation represent the majority of African countries that are considered to be an outcome of colonial construction, including countries in the HOA. Since this is considered to be the standard, I have chosen not to take countries as individual cases; rather, I deal with the model itself, hence

the rationale. Of course, this does not mean there was no indigenous proto-state formation in the precolonial historical sociology of state formation; the Mahdiya state formation in Sudan's pre-British colonial history is an example.

3. **The national liberation state formation model** refers to those cases that went through a liberation struggle to achieve statehood and includes all the liberation movements in Africa. In the HOA, the cases of Eritrea, South Sudan and Somaliland are dealt with in a separate chapter.

These three models, collectively, would enable us to understand, interpret, analyse and explain the arduous and complicate process of state formation in the HOA. The three models as collective analytical and explanatory instruments would distinctly address the perennial challenges the HOA encounters. The rationale behind the adoption of the models for the HOA could be explained deriving from three factors that make the region distinct. These are: (i) the region's predisposition to high degree of conflicts and wars, (ii) the region's subjection to flagrant geopolitical interventions and (iii) the region's unique characteristics of production of new states from existing ones. Only the HOA, in the African Continent, exhibited successful secessionist statehood. This complex history, divergence of trajectory and suffering demand us to employ heuristic and innovative methodology, approach and mechanism. The three historical phenomena and trajectories dictating developments of societies of the HOA underpin the adoption of the three-model of state formation in the HOA.

Historical Sociology of Nation Formation differs from other works on the region in three aspects. Firstly, it employs three models as an aggregate analytical and explanatory methodological approach. Secondly, does not simply discard the impact of colonialism, rather it promotes the idea of striking balance between precolonial and colonial legacies of state formation. Thirdly, it highlights the evolutionary and continuum process of state formation connecting past, present and future. In other words, state formation is not a fixed onetime work. State formation in the HOA is still a work in progress.

The point of departure of this book is that the origin, nature and structure of the state are root causes of wars and conflicts that contribute to state crises. Alleviating the multiple and interconnected pathologies plaguing the region requires understanding, analysing and interpreting

the origin, nature and structure of the state. The message the book attempts to convey is that to understand the complex problems of the HOA, we need to understand the nature and structure of the state. To do that requires us to understand the history, genesis, processes, routes, models and variabilities of the historical sociology of state formation. To address the multifaceted problems of the region, we need to have a proper and adequate understanding of the processes, mechanisms, dynamics and consequences; the state is at the centre of it all.

Societies in the HOA have old civilisations and long histories of statehood (see El Mahdi 1965; Ullendorff 1973; Levine 2000; Marcus 2002; Fattovich 2010; Schmidt 2009). Indulging in this long history is, however, beyond the scope and objective of this book. Hence, it primarily pivots around modern state formation. Nevertheless, a more detailed treatment of the Ethiopian case is justified due to its proto-state formation nature.

For comparative purposes, a general overview of the literature on the origins, evolution, theories and models of states is also provided. Accordingly, processes, routes and historiographies are explicated without subscribing to linearity and a teleologically guided end. The book identifies three distinct but intermittently related models of state formation in the HOA. The work is an endeavour of explication and analysis of simultaneous delineation and fusion of three models of state formation. This assumption is predicated on the inference that in spite of the variance in routes, trajectories and processes of formation, the three types of state formation demonstrably illustrate identical performative functionality once states are at the top of their power. Irrespective of variance of modality, origin and historiography, they behave in the same way; the demonstrated historical variance does not imply functional variance. In addition, this book briefly looks at the political philosophy, historiography, historical sociology, political sociology and anthropology of state formation.

It also demonstrates overlaps with and transgressions beyond the boundaries of three forms of state formation, in which surgical delineation between them at times becomes difficult to achieve. This, however, does not mean historical variance is of no significance to the behaviour, performance and legitimacy of the state. With regard to the last, for instance, states extract legitimacy from a variety of sources. While the proto-state may extract legitimacy from indigenous history, tradition, culture, institutions and authorities, the colonial state principally extracts

it from colonially created territoriality and accompanying institutions; and the national liberation state, from revolutionary performance credentials.

This chapter concerns variables and realities that influence and constrain the processes and trajectories of state formation in the HOA. The chapter will, therefore, closely examine some of the factors that have direct implications for state formation in the region, which will be elaborated in subsequent chapters.

The HOA—consisting of Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Djibouti—has inherited three models or forms of state formation, deriving from three sources. Proto-state formation pursued an indigenous route, process and structure. The actors involved in state formation are primarily indigenous, though they interact with external actors in forming and reforming the state. Proto-state formation in Ethiopia advanced through various stages. The first stage could be referred to as feudal absolutist state formation, more or less presumed to be similar to that of Western Europe. This was followed by self-proclaimed Marxist-Leninist Military socialist state formation. The Marxist-Leninist military socialist state was succeeded by the ethnic federalist state, which was introduced by ethnic nationalist insurgencies. Feudal state formation could also be discerned at a number of stages.

The second model refers to a type of state formation that was determined and constructed by colonialism, an outcome of the Berlin Conference of 1884–1885 where European powers, in their ‘scramble for Africa’, created political units in Africa that identified the respective powers’ possessions. The third model refers to states that came into existence as a result of a protracted national liberation struggle. It is important to note that a particular state might display features of all three models or some of them at various periods of its historical evolution and trajectory. Does this variation in the genealogy of state formation make a difference to the behaviour and exercise of the power of the state? This is a central question the book endeavours to answer.

The three models pose their own challenges and opportunities to the overall state formation enterprise, content, behaviours, structures, institutions, participation, inclusion/exclusion, power relations and exercise of power. They also pose a veritable challenge to social science discourse, theory and methodology. State-society relations are also defined by the type of state, particularly in its capacity for penetration, how it treats the social contract, etc. In this regard, perhaps, the national liberation state may display a greater penetrative capacity than the proto- or colonial state.

This penetrative capacity stems from the national liberation state's genesis as a rurally based movement, which has already extensively penetrated rural society, in particular, before ascending to state power. The entry point to the future national liberation state is through rural areas, where the state begins as a small guerrilla movement, eventually conquering the entire nation.

In the genealogy of state formation, the national liberation state is a phase—as such, a second phase. Both Eritrea and Somaliland are, for instance, colonial creations and colonial state formations. The decolonisation process, which is a logical culmination of sovereign statehood, was interrupted—in the case of Somaliland, by a voluntary union; in the case of Eritrea, by a forced federal marriage—necessitating a war of liberation as a means to achieve sovereign statehood. Their rebirth is attributed to their struggle for national liberation rather than decolonisation, which defines the peculiar nature they display. Ethiopia, however, went through various stages in its trajectory of state formation, which had institutional, structural, processual, epistemological and ontological implications; there were no clear boundaries or distinctions as regards to when and how the three typologies of state formation might merge or differentiate themselves.

The nature of the state in the HOA, its structure, institutional proclivities, mechanisms of exercising power and external relations dictate the conflicts and conflict structures devastating the HOA, and which dictate the nature, structure and performance of the state, alongside ubiquitous external interventions. The basic premise of the book is that the interplay of conflicts and external interventions over the long history of state formation and related pathologies plays a significant role in the structuration and formation of the state in the HOA. This chapter aims to provide a brief exposition of the factors that affect the process of state formation. It argues that the implications of the involvement of convoluted factors have resulted in deformed state formation. This deformity has in turn generated the multiple conflicts, environmental degradation, poverty, underdevelopment, migration and instability that define the HOA.

This chapter consists of seven sections: the following section (section “[Pathologies Hampering State Formation in the HOA](#)”) discusses the pathologies afflicting the HOA; section “[Interplay of the Pathologies](#)”, the interplay of the pathologies; section “[External Interventions](#)”, concerted external interventions; section “[Conceptual Framework](#)”, the

conceptual framework; and section “[Methodology](#)”, methodological issues. The final section (section “[Theme and Organisation of the Book](#)”) describes the theme and organisation of the book.

PATHOLOGIES HAMPERING STATE FORMATION IN THE HOA

This section will briefly analyse the convoluted pathologies hampering the project of state formation in the HOA. Rampant pathologies define the region, which is often described as the most conflict-prone on the continent. The institutional and structural pathologies afflicting the HOA can, in general, be explained by identity domination, inequality, coercion, exclusion and marginalisation, poverty and underdevelopment, democratic deficiency, misgovernance, and skewed representation and participation. Institutional and structural situations are embedded in power relations between actors (e.g. individuals, political organisations, ethnic groups, interethnic relations, centre-periphery relations, regional environment, global relations, issues). In short, structures, actors, issues, relationships and environment define the pathologies.

In concrete and specific terms, the pathologies bedevilling the HOA region can be summarised in five clusters. The first four are of an internal nature, while the fifth is external: (1) conflict; (2) state crisis; (3) environmental degradation; (4) poverty and underdevelopment; and (5) external interventions (Bereketeab [2013](#); Woodward [2013](#); Schmidt [2013](#); Mengisteab [2014](#); Clapham [2017](#); Lewis and Harbeson [2016](#)). These pathologies have a veritable impact on the state formation process empirically, theoretically, structurally and institutionally; in particular, because state formation is conceptualised as institution formation and wars have the tendency to obliterate institutions and hamper their construction.

In relation to conflicts, they are understood as acts that involve physical violence which destroys lives and causes material destruction. In the present work, conflict and war are used interchangeably (Tom [2017](#): 40–41; Bereketeab [2013](#); Mengisteab [2014](#)). Conflicts are divided into intrastate and interstate. Interstate conflicts take place between internationally recognised or sovereign states. Traditionally, interstate conflicts have occurred infrequently in the HOA. The prominent interstate conflicts are the Ethiopia-Somalia wars of 1964 and 1977–1978; and the Ethiopia-Eritrea war of 1998–2000 (Bereketeab [2010](#); Woodward

2013). Compared to their relatively brief duration, however, the devastation wrought by interstate conflicts is immense. The Ethiopia-Eritrea war is thought to have cost the lives of more than 100,000 soldiers and material destruction estimated in billions of US dollars, and displaced millions of people (Negash and Tonvoll 2000).

Intrastate conflicts take place within a state's boundaries. They may assume a variety of names: civil wars, communal wars, ethnic conflicts, subnational conflicts, etc. (Mengisteab 2011; Clapham 1995). Intrastate conflicts are the most common type. In terms of frequency and duration, they greatly overshadow interstate wars; and because they last a long time, the material and human cost of intrastate wars is also colossal. Sudan has gone through consecutive wars since 1955. The longest war in southern Sudan concluded with the emergence of the Republic of South Sudan on 9 July 2011. Nevertheless, wars in the restive regions of Darfur, Blue Nile, South Kurdufan and sporadic conflict in the Kassala region have continued, putting Sudan in a perpetual state of war (Sorbo and Ahmed 2013; Johnson 2011; Harir and Tvedt 1994; Rolandsen 2005; Deng 2008). South Sudan has also been trapped in a bloody intrastate conflict since December 2013 (Chol 2021; Bereketeab 2017). The transition from liberation movement to civic government proved a formidable challenge for the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) (Bereketeab 2014c; Wambugu 2019).

Ethiopia was plunged into intrastate war with the commencement of the Eritrean struggle for independence in 1961, which lasted for 30 years. Ethiopia also suffered from ethnic nationalist wars in its Oromo, Somali and Tigray regions. Multiethnic movements fought the central government during the 1970s and 1980s, with the aim of changing state structures and retuning power relations (Markakis 2011; Tareke 2009; Bulcha 2002; Leencho 2004). The collapse of the military government in 1991 brought a coalition of ethnic nationalist movements to power, yet failed to end the chronic intrastate wars in the country (Gudina 2003; Tareke 2009; Lata 2004). Old and new ethnic nationalist conflicts, as well as multinational ones, remained active in Ethiopia, maintaining the old image of the country as war torn.

Various armed rebel groups challenged the government of Mohamed Siad Barre in Somalia in the 1980s. When the Barre regime was defeated in 1991, the Somali state also collapsed, leading to clan wars that continue in one form or other (Ismail 2010; Elmi 2010; Maruf and Joseph 2018).

Somaliland unilaterally declared its independence in 1991, while Puntland emerged as an autonomous entity in 1998 (Jhazbhay 2009). Today, there is relative peace and stability in the two breakaway regions (Walls 2014; Hoehne 2015). The rest of Somalia is still marching along a path of destruction and disintegration, with the mushrooming of autonomous regional clan states.

State crisis is caused by many factors. Evidently, the two most important factors causing state crisis are the origin of the state and concomitant rampant conflicts. These are two mutually reinforcing factors. The colonial origin of the state engendered structural deformation, primarily seen in the rural/urban cleavage (Mamdani 1996; Ekeh 1975). It alienated the postcolonial state from its rural societal foundations, the overwhelming majority of population located mainly in the rural areas, depriving the state, dominated by an urban minority, of popular domestic legitimacy. The absence of legitimacy is at the centre of the state crisis. Rampant conflicts also contribute to the deformation of the state. State institutions are either destroyed or cannot evolve. The state suffers from identity-related conflicts due to its inability to represent the identity groups within its ambit and ensure their equal participation in the public realm (Keller 2014; Mengisteab and Bereketeab 2012; Deng 2008). This concerns mismanagement of diversity. A state facing chronic wars is unable to produce functional and durable institutions that uphold peace, stability, development and democratic governance.

The third factor constituting the pathologies is environmental degradation. The HOA is suffering from concerted physical and atmospheric damage, which are the outcome of human and natural causes. Natural causes are associated with climatic changes that generate deforestation, desertification, soil erosion and degradation. Recently, the El Niño phenomenon has also exacerbated climate change-related problems. The second, human-related set of causes are primarily linked to the rampant wars, which cause enormous physical and climatic destruction. In addition to producing toxic emissions resulting from warfare, machines and weapons, military activities also destroy flora and fauna. Consequently, the HOA is frequently hit by recurrent droughts and famine. Shortages of drinking water, and erratic and undependable rainfall, mean that it is common for people to face difficulties in eking out their livelihoods (Bereketeab 2014a).

The fourth factor is underdevelopment and abysmal poverty. The majority of the peoples of the HOA live below the minimum subsistence level. Countries in the HOA consistently rank near the bottom of the Human Development Index (Salih 2018). The pervasive and abysmal poverty the region suffers from has multiple causes, the main ones being war, political instability, mismanagement of diversity, mismanagement of resources, bad governance and external intervention (Mengisteab 2011; Bereketab 2013; Woodward 2013). Poverty is one of the strongest drivers that pushes people to resort to violence. The old adage that the poor are readily involved in conflict because they have nothing to lose seems easily proved in the HOA.

The fifth factor is external interventions. The composite variables of external interventions include colonialism, the Cold War, the so-called global war on terror, the fight against piracy and the scramble for resources (Woodward 2006, 2003; Schmidt 2013; Brosig 2015; Yordanov 2016). The demise of colonialism was succeeded by the Cold War and neocolonialism. The consequences of superpower blundering were conspicuous in the HOA. The United States (US) and the Soviet Union (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) transformed the HOA into an arena for proxy wars, the result being chronic intra- and interstate conflicts (Yordanov 2016; Bereketab 2013; Markakis et al. 2021).

The end of Cold War provided a temporary respite to the region when the superpowers retreated. It was not long, however, before the US returned to the region on the grounds that it was to hunt for alleged terrorists who were suspected of having found safe haven in Somalia. Terrorist attacks on the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, and in the US itself on 11 September 2001, heralded the global war on terror (Samatar 2013; Möller 2013). This constituted the third stage of international intervention in the HOA (Yordanov 2016; Sun and Zoubir 2016). The fight against piracy off the coast of Somalia led virtually all the world's naval forces to converge on the region, remilitarising the HOA (Bereketab 2014b; Melvin 2019). The latest international intervention in the HOA assumed the form of what has come to be known as the scramble for resources. Minerals, oil and arable land are highly coveted not only in the West, but also in the East (mainly China, but also India and the newly rising countries) and Middle Eastern countries (particularly for arable land) (Eskeziaw 2020: 14; Hules and Singh 2017), with the potential for military confrontation. This development

has adversely affected the state formation process just as its predecessors—colonialism, neo-colonialism and Cold War interventions—did, resulting in the continued deformity of the state.

These features in turn generate state crises that engender various forms of conflicts. State crises and conflicts render the HOA region the unstable, poverty-ridden, prone to extremism and radicalism, underdeveloped and vulnerable to external interventions. This bears testimony to a vicious circle of mutually reinforcing factors that adversely affect the process of state formation.

INTERPLAY OF THE PATHOLOGIES

The cumulative effects of the interplay of the pathologies on state formation are conspicuous. Individually, they may not have a great impact, but cumulatively they are devastating. Conflicts are defined as either intrastate or interstate. The interplay between the two forms is primarily expressed in terms of how easily an intrastate conflict could spill over into interstate conflict; or an interstate conflict could induce intrastate conflict. In other words, domestic conflicts have the tendency to drag in neighbouring, leading to interstate conflict (Touval 2015: 416–417; Bereketeab 2013).

The inherent dialectical reciprocity of the interplay of both types of conflict makes it difficult to detect, diagnose and resolve potential flash-points of conflicts. This is exacerbated in a situation where identity groups are spread across international political boundaries. The politics of identity in multiethnic societies that are geographically contiguous may be easily deflect in abutting regions, where shared common identities bestride borders. But the identity groups share not only identities, but also problems that can drag states into interstate conflicts (Mengisteab 2014; Keller 2014; Deng 2008). The history of the HOA has shown time and again how this overlap and interplay have devastated the region.

In terms of the interplay between conflict and state crisis, the two clearly and decisively affect one another. Conflicts impact on the nature of the state and state formation process. A conflict-ridden state is certainly unable to maintain routine functions, including delivering basic services. A state that is not capable of delivering basic services is devoid of any form of legitimacy. The nature of the state may thus generate disaffection, grievances and conflicts. Unambiguously, a society riven by chronic conflicts faces unsurmountable difficulties in building state institutions that determine the viability and functionality of the state. The state as

an institutional artefact is very much contingent upon the construction of its constitutive institutions (Poggi 1978; Kamrava 2000). A state suffering from festering conflicts is deformed by them, and this deformity in turn becomes a source of chronic conflicts (Mengisteab 2014; Christensen and Laitin 2019).

Environmental degradation may in part be caused by war, just as it may also be the cause of it. Wars that have raged for decades have contributed to environmental degradation in the HOA; deforestation, desertification and soil erosion are some of the conspicuous outcomes. These are contributing factors to resource shortages afflicting the livelihoods of communities with different modes of life. Clashes between groups generate resource-based conflict, which by extension affects state functions. The interplay between conflicts and environmental degradation may also ultimately lead to structural and cultural transformation (Bereketeab 2014a).

Environmental degradation that generates scarcity of resources leads to conflicts, particularly when resources are not properly managed. Resource-based conflicts are at their most acute when they play out between nomadic pastoralists and sedentary farmers (Ahmed 2001; Ahmed and Manger 2006; Mohamed 2009), pitching highlanders against lowlanders, as well as different ethnolinguistic groups against one another. Environmental degradation becomes the cause of poverty and underdevelopment and vice-versa. Poverty and underdevelopment are also involved in producing conflicts and state crises.

EXTERNAL INTERVENTIONS

The last dimension in the cluster relates to externality. External interventions either cause or aggravate conflict, state crisis, environmental degradation, and poverty and underdevelopment. In turn, state crisis, fragility and collapse make good excuses for external intervention. The HOA is probably the region in Africa that has been most affected by external interventions, as described above. Big power and military interventions have negative implications for the state formation process, particularly state-society relations, which define the functionality of state formation.

State formation, by its very nature, is domestic. In addition, it is political, demanding intricate compromises, dialogue, negotiation, bargaining and public discussion among stakeholders. It is imperative that state

formation depends on and reflects societal reality through the art of creating social equilibrium, consensus and balance. External interventions upset the equilibrium and balance, leading to dissonance, competition, mistrust, cleavages and disorder, which disrupt the consensus-oriented culture of the HOA societies.

The historical genealogy of external intervention in the regions can be traced as far back as the Middle Ages, the inception of which relates to a confrontation over trade routes through the Red Sea and religious influence, between the Ottoman Empire, on the side of Muslims, and the Portuguese in support of Christian Abyssinia in the fifteenth century (Levine 2000). For the purposes of this book, modern external intervention in the HOA began in conjunction with the genesis of colonialism. The ideational foundation of colonialism relates to what is commonly known as the scramble for Africa, when European leaders gathered at a conference in Berlin, Germany, in 1884–1885 and resolved to partition Africa among themselves (Brosig 2015; Davidson 1992; Smith 1983). The rationale behind European imperial penetration in Africa is invariably depicted as primarily to search for raw materials, markets for their finished goods and cheap labour (Schmidt 2018: 10–11; Smith 1983: 26–27). It also concerned geostrategically driven rivalry (Yordanov 2016). This classical physical colonialism was later replaced by indirect, metaphysical colonialism, commonly known as neocolonialism (Nkrumah 1970).

The British colonised Sudan and northern Somalia (Ryle et al. 2011; Walls 2014), while Italy colonised Eritrea and southern Somalia (Lewis 2002; Mesghenna 1988; Negash 1987; Bereketeab 2007); and France, Djibouti (Abdallah 2012). Ethiopia escaped European colonisation, though it was briefly occupied by Italy from 1936 to 1941 during the World War II (Rubenson 1978; Erlich 1996). Nonetheless, it was involved in its own expansionism and colonisation of peoples and territories to the south (Zewde 2001; Tareke 1996; Hassen 1990; Markakis 1974; Clapham 2002). This expansion sowed the seeds of future conflict, the consequences of which are still devastating the country. Ethiopia's contemporary problems can to some extent be explained by its expansion in the nineteenth century.

The Somalis were most affected by the combined European colonial intervention and partition, and Ethiopian expansion. They were divided and incorporated into five states (Markakis et al. 2021). This division produced among Somalis the dream of pan-Somalism. Since independence and the formation of the Republic of Somalia, Somalis have

pursued a policy of realising this dream and the ambition of uniting all ethnic Somalis under the umbrella of one state at any cost. Their desire for unity was symbolically represented by the five-pointed star flag. This irredentist ambition pitched the Somalis against their neighbours. Consequently, it has constituted one of the contributing factors to the pathologies afflicting the region (Lewis 2002).

This indicates that some of the pathologies afflicting the HOA originated in colonial intervention and territorial expansion. Structures, institutions and political economy introduced as a result engendered cleavages based primarily on a rural/urban binary. Small urban-based modern elites came to dominate postcolonial societies, with all the concomitant social, political, economic and cultural inequalities, tensions and conflicts. The overwhelmingly rural majorities were excluded and marginalised, as an institutional cleavage emerged whereby urban-based institutions gained primacy over rurally based ones. This rural/urban dichotomy constitutes a perennial source of conflicts (Ekeh 1975; Mamdani 1996; Herbst 2000; Englebert 2005). Postcolonial leaders never made a serious attempt to remedy the state deformation caused by its colonial origins.

Colonialism was replaced by another form of intervention, a fatal combination of the overlap between neocolonialism and the Cold War. Decolonisation saw the physical withdrawal of colonial masters, while their economic, political, cultural and diplomatic domination—and dependence on them—continued. This coincided with lethal geostrategic and ideological rivalry that broke out between the US and the Soviet Union. According to Nkrumah (1970: ix):

The essence of neo-colonialism is that the State which is subject to it is, in theory, independent and has all the outward trappings of international sovereignty. In reality its economic system and thus its political policy is directed from outside.

The political economy of the postcolonial state was framed in a way that allowed the erstwhile masters to perpetuate their dominance. Gradually, with the exception of France, the colonial masters in the HOA retreated from their ex-colonies and were replaced by the emerging global superpowers. The Cold War that followed the end of the World War II converted the HOA into a theatre of proxy war (Brosig 2015; Yordanov 2016). In pursuit of ideological and geostrategic world domination, the US and the Soviet Union supplied sophisticated modern weapons to their

client states (Yordanov 2016; Schmidt 2013; Woodward 2003, 2006). The US foothold in the region began with the establishment of the Kagnew Station military base in Asmara, Eritrea, in 1953 (Habte Selassie 1989; Yohannes 1991). The Soviet Union began to be involved in the region following the independence of Somalia in 1960 (Yordanov 2016). Weapons pumped into the region were employed in settling intrastate conflicts, suppressing internal rebellion and fighting interstate. As a result, during the Cold War the HOA was the most unstable and war-torn region on the African continent (Cliffe 1999; Cliffe and White 2002; Bereketeab 2013). Consequently, this situation seriously distorted the state formation process in the region. The state, whose cardinal function is to bring peace, stability, unity and development itself became the source of instability, disunity and underdevelopment.

The end of the Cold War heralded a new global era. The HOA suddenly lost its strategic importance and the superpowers quickly retreated from the region. The new era of retreat also brought benefits to the HOA region: a halt to some of the chronic, devastating conflicts; the demise of the most notorious dictators; and respite, albeit temporary, from the superpower-induced wars. The region, therefore, experienced profound changes. However, the respite did not last long. Another intervention began to affect the region, the global war on terror, a US-led war (Schmidt 2013, 2018) that was marketed as being in response to a threat that affected all nations. In response to its misguided global foreign policy, the US attracted worldwide terrorist hostility and began to hunt terrorists, real or imagined, all over the world.

The first indication of US reintervention or reengagement in the HOA emerged in 1998, following terrorist attacks on its embassies in Nairobi, Kenya and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (Hansen 2013: 24–26). The perpetrators were thought to be hiding in the lawless country of Somalia. In its hunt to find them, the US funded, armed and trained warlords who were creating havoc in society. Accordingly, the US Central Intelligence Agency created the Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism, which further deepened the disintegration of Somali politics (Samatar 2013; Möller 2013). Finally, spurred by the US position on the regional threat of terrorism, Ethiopia invaded Somalia in December 2006, sparking the emergence of militant Islamist, Al-Shabaab (Samatar 2013; Hansen 2013; Harper 2012; Maruf and Joseph 2018).

In 2003, the phenomenon of piracy off the shores of Somalia exploded. Piracy constituted a great threat to world trade by disrupting

a strategic waterway through which major world trade is commuted, pirates hijacked commercial ships and demanded ransoms. The lucrative business increased in momentum and pace until 2011 (Woodward 2013: 100–101; Baniela and Rios 2012; Möller 2013: 187–88; Brosig 2015: 188). This serious threat to a commercial artery galvanised major world powers to dispatch naval forces to the Red Sea and Indian Ocean (Bereketeab 2014b; Sun and Zoubir 2016). Within a short time, the region was littered with sophisticated warfare and surveillance technology, but without alleviating the plight of Somalia. Piracy in the region was followed by a new scramble for resources. Transnational corporations and states began to flock to the region in search of natural resources, throwing the state formation project into further uncertainty by inserting a wedge between state and society, as was clearly seen in the popular uprising in Ethiopia in 2015.

The political implications of flagrant external interventions were a further deformity of the state and showed dysfunctionality of the state formation process. As alluded to earlier, this is because state formation is a domestic affair and political by nature—external intervention disrupts that. Societies need to construct state institutions at their own pace, devising their own strategy, stemming from their own roots, history, culture, and sociopolitical and socioeconomic level of development. External intervention, therefore, derails this objective.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

One of the pathologies afflicting the HOA pertains to the situation of the state. Pervasive state crisis, fragility and weakness deriving from the nature, origin, structure and construction of the state are some of the attributes of the dysfunctionalities of the state in the HOA. In other words, pervasive and rampant conflicts, and intra- and interstate wars, are intimately associated with the nature and structure of the state.

The state is *par excellence* the source and solution of the pathologies. According to Charles Tilly's axiom, the state makes war and war makes the state (Tilly 1975; Fukuyama 2012), but the state also makes peace. The way the state is constructed, the manner in which it executes its cardinal functions, the way it relates to society, and its representativeness or lack thereof, determine the solution to the pathologies.

A challenging question we are confronted with is how we should conceptualise state formation. Do we conceptualise it according to the

Western model of state formation? Should we have a specific model of state formation applicable to the region? Or is there a hybrid model that accommodates the two? A strand of scholarship that rejects the applicability of the Western model of state formation stems from the conception of the nation state as a homogeneous population that is a monoethnic nation constituting its own state (Gellner 1983). Markakis et al. (2021) argue that the concept of the nation state is not applicable to the HOA: ‘The state and nation are concepts that have evolved along separate lines but converged (with different levels of success) to form what we now call the nation-state’ (ibid.: 13). They further note, ‘the marriage of the two spawned the ideology of nationalism with its ideal of a culturally homogeneous society, underpinning the state with legitimacy and loyalty... This model was transposed to Africa, a vastly different world, without the slightest concession to its uniqueness and the results have been tragic’ (ibid.). The central thesis of the argument is the homogeneity of the nation state. Multiethnic societies, which are not homogeneous, therefore, cannot form a nation state. The assumption is based on a number of fallacies:

1. It assumes that Western societies are ethnically homogeneous.
2. It forgets it took Western societies more than 500 years to reach where they are today, while African societies are a few decades old.
3. It fails to acknowledge territoriality as the foundation for nation state formation.
4. It glosses over the fact that there were different models of and routes to nation state formation in the West, too.
5. It ignores the involvement of globalisation in the homogenisation process of nation state formation.
6. The nation state is not something that is formed once and for all; it is an unceasing gestation process that takes generations: ‘processes of state formation are not completed at a certain point in time after which “the state” exists as a fixed, singular entity’ (Metsola 2011: 50). The process requires constant nurturing.

This book does not attempt to provide answers to these conceptual questions—that is beyond the scope and purpose of the work. The question, however, bears a particular significance, since the cases under study

involve aspects that are intimately related to it. Here, three conceptions are identified as the foundation of the historical sociology of state formation in the Horn of Africa: proto-state, colonial state and national liberation state. The colonial state formation is a legacy of European colonisation, whose metamorphosis rests on the European state formation model. Colonialism constructed states in the image of Western state formation. The Western historical model of state formation underscores three variables as the foundation of state formation, notably, institutionalisation, bureaucratisation and democratisation (Evans 1989; Bratton and van de Walle 1997; Kohli 2003; Kamrava 2000). The proto-state model refers to an indigenous process of state formation, wherein the main actors of state construction are indigenous. The national liberation state, however, is a construction of a protracted liberation struggle. A national liberation movement led by liberation fighters assumes responsibility for constructing the state (Southall 2013; Bereketeab 2018b).

The conception of three forms of state formation this book is based on is a broad reflection and expression of different types of historical trajectories, structures and processes configured into variables of political, cultural, historiographic ensembles and differentialities that distinctively identify and define the three typologies of state formation in the HOA. The state in this work is primarily understood as an institutional artefact. In other words, the state in its abstract form is an institutional edifice or category. Here it is important to make an analytical distinction between the abstract and concrete natures of state existence. The abstract nature of the state refers to the general idea of the state, which is not conspicuous or tangible, yet is omnipotent and omnipresent. State as a concrete entity, however, entails properties that can be seen, heard or touched. The latter is concretised through the executive branch of state, the various ministries, the ministers, their staff, buildings, etc. The state as an abstract idea assumes concrete form in the embodiment of the executive, legislative and judicial bodies.

In the institutional conceptualisation of state formation, the trio may converge on a common focal point. It is also observed that differentiation, in the sociological tradition, is made between institution and organisation in what is referred to above as abstract or concrete. While institution refers to invisible, abstract and general organs, organisation refers to a manifestly visible and concrete part of that organ. In the sense of visibility and concretion, we could further refer to the executive, legislative and judicial

branches of the state. The three branches, therefore, represent the organisational dimension, while the state, as an overarching body, represents the institution. In other words, the state as an institution is the overarching organ, and the three branches make up the component foundations of the state.

The three processes and routes of the historical sociology of state formation identified in this book represent constellations of actors, structures, historical incidents, internal and external interventions and mechanisms that determinedly contribute to the specific corresponding state formation process and model. These variables may explain the distinct features and characteristics of each model.

Here, it is also worthwhile briefly making the distinction between state formation and state building as understood in this book. State formation in its historical sociological evolution usually refers to a gradual, spontaneous, processual and evolutionary process (without subscribing to linearity) leading to the genesis of a political entity called the state. It depicts the transitions and transformations in political, legal, economic, demographic, cultural, structural and philosophical spheres that pave the way for the emergence of the state (Fukuyama 2012). It depicts the unintentional and non-purposive natural political and organisational configuration that grows from societal transformation and transition, usually from a small village community to a rather more complex large-scale society. This is a development along the lines of what classical sociologists such as Émile Durkheim (1984) designated a transformation from a simple mechanical solidarity to a complex organic solidarity, or what the sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies (1887) designated the transformation from *Gemeinschaft* to *Gesellschaft*. In a nutshell, it depicts the emergence of the proto-state.

This sociological tradition of the construction of society rests on the premise of evolutionary transformation from a simple, non-diversified community to a highly complex, specialised and diversified society. The variables that generate transformative development include the density, concentration, growth and adjoining of proximate villages, leading to their transformation into a larger, highly complex society. This complex society is then characterised by division of labour, where the different sections of the society fulfil different and specialised functions.

This development is what Durkheim (1984) depicts as transcendence from mechanical solidarity to organic solidarity. The former represents simple static community where monotonous functions similar to

those of a single-cell organism are conducted. The latter represents a complex, diversified, specialised society where different sections conduct different functions, similar to a multicellular organism, the totality of those different groups and functions constituting society (Durkheim 1984: 132–40). This developmental conception is based on evolutionary biology. This transformation and formation could provide an overarching perspective on the process of the history of sociology of state formation, while simultaneously bearing in mind characteristic differences of level of development, routes of trajectory, models, etc.

State building, however, is intentional and purposive social engineering. In the trajectory of human history, state building follows and is the replication of the already existing proto-state model. In this case, it is a conscious, purposive and intentional elite-driven project. It resembles the work of an architect who designs a model of a building on paper and translates their sketch into a concrete house using physical materials. This second stage of state formation (building) is often referred to as diffusion (Tilly 1975).

The proto-state typology stipulates a state formation process that is more or less indigenous. The indigeneity of the formation process is supposedly based on the conception that external agents and factors play a minimal, non-decisive role, if at all. The colonial state formation typology, in contrast, is centred on the conception that the state formation process is determined by colonial agents and structures, which locates it in the second historical stage of state building. Colonial state formation represents a deformed replication of the European state model, with no tangible contribution by the local population or agency. Western state structures are simply transplanted from the home country to colonised societies, without also transferring corresponding benefits and rights.

The replication that took place through exportation and transplantation of a historically limited experience, with politico-culturally rationalistic, socioeconomically particularistic structures, institutions, practices and mechanisms constituted a distortion and deformity of the natural evolutionary formation of state and society in the HOA. The process is often seen as an interruption of the domestic evolutionary process. The historical sociological experience of state formation in Ethiopia is arguably in the first category. Therefore, the burden of transplantation and consequent state deformity could have been avoided. Yet state formation in modern Ethiopia is burdened by the very fact that the Abyssinian state expanded and conquered the southern peoples in the same fashion

and same period as European powers, which still affects the state formation project in the country, particularly given its territorially expansionist perspective.

The conception of national liberation state formation holds that state formation emerges as a result of a protracted war of liberation. Therefore, the national liberation state is born out of an emancipatory and liberatory movement and struggle guided by national liberation ideology and agents. Moreover, the process and inception of state formation take place within the space where the movement carries out the struggle, and the space it creates affects its future behaviour and performance. A specific political culture is developed under the liberation struggle that shapes the post-liberation state formation process.

In some ways, the national liberation state formation model coalesces around Tilly's axiom of the state making war and war making the state. It is born out of and through a war of liberation. The war makes the national liberation movement (a miniature state), while the national liberation movement makes a war of liberation and state formation. The third model or typology is, therefore, by necessity revolutionary and deviates considerably from the liberal state formation process. This deviation becomes conspicuously clear in its post-liberation behaviour, exercise of power and how it deals with society.

Overall, in this book the concept of state formation is also elaborated to include the assumption that state building constitutes a subcategory of state formation. In other words, the point of departure in this book is that while state formation could be construed as an overarching historical, evolutionary, spontaneous, transcendent and encompassing process, state building is limited, purposive, intentional, and engineered by actors. Today, however, the distinction is blurred and thus used interchangeably.

METHODOLOGY

The methodological approach employed in this book is essentially multidisciplinary and multidimensional. The essentiality of the pluralistic methodological approach is dictated by the fact that many disciplines are involved in explaining and analysing the process of the historical sociology of state formation, including history, political science, economics, sociology, anthropology, international relations, area studies, cultural studies, etc. This plurality of disciplines, collectively, has adequate power to explain and analyse the process of state formation. In turn, it

requires a methodological approach encompassing multiple and eclectic methods. Macro-sociological study imperatively necessitates employing the sociological tradition of the actor-structure explanatory and analytical methodological model, which inductively and deductively broaches the state formation process.

In this sociological tradition of *Verstehen* (understanding) and hermeneutics (interpretation), the task is geared towards understanding, interpreting, examining and analysing. This tradition presupposes accentuation of context, specificity, diversity, historicity of processes, mechanisms and routes. Stemming from this conceptualisation, we, therefore, deem it appropriate not to adhere to the debate that promotes the non-viability of the European model of state formation to Africa. Rather, we deem it appropriate to emphasise state formation in various historical epochs, contingent on societal setting; socioeconomic, politico-cultural, institutional and geographic realities; level of development; and stage of formation process variations on display. Nevertheless, all states basically tend to display common features, particularly functions, structures and ambitions. Acknowledgement and acceptance of these facts save us from the trap of denying the existence of the nation state in Africa or the non-viability of the European state model. Moreover, methodologically it is intriguing to align the contemporary African situation of state formation with the discourse on the post-nation state, in fashion in the West, when it applies to Africa, where nation state formation is still in its early stages. This work, then, focuses on the continuous formation and transformation of societies stemming from internal dynamics and mechanisms.

In this context, the specific interplay of actor-structure correlation in the evolution, process and structuration of state formation in the three typologies, in particular, is examined and given extra emphasis. In this regard, the central question the book grapples with is how factors related to structures and actors explain the process, evolution and metamorphosis of the historical sociology of state formation in the HOA. In terms of traditional structure-actor sociological analysis, the three typologies of state formation show distinct variability. The categories of structures and actors active in proto-state formation, for instance, are not the same as those active in colonial or national liberation state formation. Historical sociological methodology aids us in unpacking, interpreting, analysing and synthesising the historical evolution of respective societies' journeys towards the arduous and intricate process of state formation.

A historical analytical approach underpins process tracing that describes social, political, economic and international phenomena, processes and developments. ‘Process tracing is a fundamental tool of qualitative analysis which inherently analyses trajectories of change and causation, hence, what could be termed as static description in a building block in analysing the processes being studied’ (Cocodia 2018: 13). Process tracing serves to infer causal correlation of historical cases, since analysis fails if consecutive phenomena are not rigorously examined in every step of the process. In following this methodological approach, this book analyses and examines historiographical trajectories and genealogies that are grounded in political, economic and cultural processes of the historical sociology of state formation of the three state models in the HOA. Overall, the work is framed in the general theoretical, conceptual, historical and discursive ontologies and epistemologies of the sociology of state formation. This helps to understand the complexities, specificities, challenges, successes, failures, modalities, applicability, non-applicability, comparability, scopes, variabilities, etc. of the sociology of state formation.

In its data collection endeavour, the book draws on a combination of various sources. It primarily consists of text analysis. Secondary data—books, articles and official documents systematically gathered over years of research on the subject—are critically analysed. Further, the work also benefits from several years of fieldwork in the region.¹ I have conducted several field trips in connection with related work I have published. All these works, field trips, data, information and experience constitute the cornerstone of this book.

THEME AND ORGANISATION OF THE BOOK

The central theme of the book concerns interrelated routes, trajectories, historiographies and processes of the historical sociology of state formation in the HOA. In this context, central thematic issues the book addresses are: (1) what a state is; (2) the genesis, historicity and trajectories of states; (3) types and models of states; (4) theories of state;

¹ These include: Eritrea: The Making of a Nation (2007); State-building in Post-liberation Eritrea: Challenges, Achievement and Potentials (2009); Self-Determination and Secession in Africa: The Post-Colonial State (2015); State Building and National Identity Reconstruction in the Horn of Africa (2017); and National Liberation Movements as Governments in Africa (2018).

and (5) the natures and structures of states. Adequately understanding these themes is of great significance to understanding the sociology of state formation and its consequences to society, moreover, its significance to state-society relations. The pervasive conflicts and wars prevalent in the HOA, which have given rise to the perception of failure, collapse, crisis and the malfunctioning of the state are directly connected with the thematic problems enumerated here. The work focuses on the three models of state formation—proto-state, colonial state and national liberation state—that constitute the central theme of the book.

The underlying rationale for preferring the three models of historical sociology of state formation as an explanatory edifice in the HOA is because of the unique and complex history of the region. The region contains the only African nation that escaped colonisation, Ethiopia, which claims a long history of continuous statehood and civilisation, yet is embroiled in the messy and incomplete process of state formation. Eritrea, which traces its modern construction to state formation, was denied the right to decolonisation and self-determination, and was thus forced to embark on a protracted and successful liberation war to assert its statehood through national liberation state formation, another unique case found in the HOA. South Sudan is perceived to be the only case of successful secession in violation of the Charter of the Organisation of African Unity/African Union, yet another case of the unique history of the HOA. Referring to the uniqueness of the HOA, Clapham (2017: 2) states, ‘the Horn provides the only cases in Africa in which secessionist movements have succeeded in winning the independence of particular regions from the states into which they were previously incorporated’.

This book consists of eight chapters. This chapter, Introduction: Challenges of State Formation, in addition to giving an outline of the book provides an account of multiple variables that constitute the reasons for the precarious nature of state formation in the HOA. It briefly analyses the multifaceted variables that affect the process of state formation, such as democratic deficiency, external interventions, conflicts, environmental degradation and state crisis. The chapter argues that it is the intricate interplay of these variables or pathologies that undergirds the shabbiness of state formation in the HOA.

Chapter 2, Theories of State Formation, is an exposition of the theoretical body that informs the historical sociology of state formation. It explores various theoretical strands, the genesis of state formation, and historical routes and processes that explain it; and traces the historical

evolution of the state during various epochs. A number of structural-functional theories such as institutional theory, social contract theory, colonial origin theory and diffusion theory of state formation are briefly discussed. The chapter is intended to serve as a comparative perspective in which the three cases are theoretically and conceptually linked to the general literature and discourse on state formation.

Chapter 3, Proto-state Formation: Ethiopia, examines an endogenous model of state formation. It deals with historical sociological state formation in Ethiopia. The Ethiopian case represents an indigenous model and process of the historical sociology of state formation on a par with the first stages of European history. The Ethiopian model is presumed to be unique on the African continent, where modern state formation is generally perceived to be the result of European colonisation. Moreover, proto-state formation also indicates a long history of gestation where different stages of transformation and reformation define and characterise the process of state formation.

Chapter 4, Colonial State Formation, analyses state formation under the aegis of colonialism. It interrogates the consequences of colonialism to state formation and subsequent performance of the postcolonial state. The structural and institutional bodies that were grafted onto society and the dislocation and subsequent relegation to informality of precolonial indigenous structures, institutions, mechanisms and authorities are scrutinised. The chapter examines the factors that render colonially induced state formation inherently precarious.

Chapter 5, the National Liberation State, examines a type of state formation that is an outcome of protracted liberation struggle. This type of state formation is often based on and guided by national liberation ideology. Foundations of state formation are laid down during the liberation struggle, which among other things include fostering a political culture of liberation. Features of the national liberation culture that ensured the victory of the liberation movement are passed on to the endeavour of post-liberation state formation. This often renders post-liberation state formation very precarious because old conditions are applied to new ones. It also indicates the inability of the national liberation movement to transform itself from national liberation political culture to a post-liberation civic culture of state formation. The chapter argues that national liberation political culture and ideology hamper post-liberation state formation.

Chapter 6, *State Legitimacy and Government Performance in the Horn of Africa*, argues that state legitimacy derives from two sources: internal and external. While the domestic refers to legitimacy endowed by citizens to the state, external refers to the international state system that confers legitimacy on the state. In an ideal situation, a symmetry exists between the two. In reality, however, there is usually an inverted relationship. The notion of inverted legitimacy describes a reality where only one source of legitimacy, either domestic or external, prevails at any time. The chapter argues that the origin of the state and consecutive external interventions destabilise and distort state legitimacy in the HOA. It concludes that inverted legitimacy leads to malfunction and crisis. It further argues that state legitimacy determines government performance, as the latter also determines the former.

Chapter 7, *Common Characteristics of the Three Typologies of State Formation: Synthesis*, examines differences and similarities between the typologies or models. The chapter attempts to reconcile and integrate commonalities, defining the models by identifying the central elements of each typology of state formation. It argues there is a convergence of models in spite of historical divergence. One of the convergence points is functions—all models of state perform the same functions, albeit with diverging efficiency and capacity. Another is hierarchical organisational arrangement and centralisation. The legitimate use of the means of coercion, and monopoly of the use of means of violence, is a common feature, at least in theory. Territorial integrity, or territoriality, and sovereignty, entering into relations with other states, are general features of all states.

Chapter 8, *Conclusion*, provides a summary and concluding remarks. By way of recapitulation, it recounts the main arguments of the book. It resolves similarities and differences between the three models and infers that while they may differ profoundly, all three display great similarities in other dimensions. The differences are clearly displayed in the historical origins, trajectories, actors and structures involved in state formation. Similarities are expressed in functions and responsibilities of state; the three models perform the same functions, delivering services, security, territorial integrity, socioeconomic services, etc. Service delivery vests legitimacy in all state models. It concludes that a productive approach to state formation in Africa would be to balance the dual legacy of colonial and precolonial institutions; and charter routes, models and mechanisms that take into consideration the specificities, peculiarities and realities of every society.

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Theories of State Formation

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an overview of theories of state formation and is intended to offer a comparative perspective. It provides a brief analysis of their origins, historical trajectories, routes, mechanisms and institutionalisation processes. The chapter constitutes a backdrop to the subsequent three empirical chapters that address three models of state formation in the HOA.

The literature of state formation is full of controversies, contradictions and contestations. The efforts of social science in search for common formula of state formation with universal validity and applicability have not yet borne fruition. The lack of common formula encompassing humanity based on overriding theory, empiri and methodology have political, policy and practical implications. The dominant conception is that the existing state model is the product of European social, cultural, economic, historical, philosophical, ideological and epistemological experience and societal setting. As such, this Euro-centric pedigree of state model would not be replicated in other societal settings. This conception questions and doubts the relevance and prevalence of states in the HOA. The dominant conceptualisation has been tribal societies are not capable of producing nation states as societies in the HOA and African in general are widely believed to be so. How solid is this conceptualisation, theoretically, empirically and methodologically? Are there fundamental differences in the

overall societal formation, evolution and transformation? To address these questions, this chapter conducts excursion on theories of state formation. The excursion would help us learn the basics of human/societal development and see what the differences and similarities are. It could not be denied that every society have its peculiar and idiosyncratic characteristics. The differences are exhibited within the European societies too. At the same time, there are certain features, which are common to humanity. In addition, globalisation as historical driver of bringing together and mixing of human beings also is known to have played important role in minimising differences. In human history, hybridity, crosspollination, borrowing, imposition, etc. are the norm that sometimes the difference might not be so big. We know concentration, density, aggregation, centralisation and integration over history take place in every community. These are factors that thrust humans towards formation, transformation and development. Both internal and external dynamics are at play in the transformation process. This theoretical exercise will help us to understand, interpret, analyse and examine the state formation process in the HOA. This chapter will enable us to identify the differences and commonalities.

The point of departure is that, despite considerable differences, all states display similarities in basic functions and structures. The differences can be explained by levels of development, periods of gestation, historical experiences, etc.

State formation has engaged various disciplines and methodological perspectives, including international relations and political science, sociology, anthropology, history and philosophy. Classical sociologists such as Émile Durkheim, Karl Marx and Max Weber were more interested in societal construction in general than nation state formation in particular (McCrone 1998: 17f; James 1996; Guibernau 1996). Societal formation and transformation occupied a central space in classical sociology. As a discipline, sociology has been described as a science of society or a field that studies society (Durkheim 1984; Comte 2012 [1884]; Spencer 1898). However, sooner or later society formation and evolution are followed by state formation. For scholars such as Ernest Gellner (1983), Anthony D. Smith (1986) and John Armstrong (1982), nations create their own states. Once, states were created; however, society and state became inseparably conterminous (Araoye 2014; Markakis et al. 2021). The conceptualisation of convergence between nation and state gave rise to the connotation of the nation state in Europe, whereas, for instance,

we find the connotation of ‘state-nation’ with reference to Africa (Smith 1983a). The state-nation configuration is presumed to exemplify a colonial and postcolonial creation in which the state bears the responsibility for constructing a nation. In other words, the nation does not exist; therefore, the colonially created state assumes responsibility for constructing it. This reversal of sequentiality is then presumed to explain the predicament African societies face.

Stressing the common conception that the field of state formation involves a plethora of disciplines, Richmond (2013: 300) argues:

The state has been written about *ad nauseum* in a number of different disciplines and from different methodological perspectives, in international relations and political science, where it is of particular interest for realist theoretical approaches (e.g. Morgenthau, Waltz, etc.), to sociology (Weber, Tilly), anthropology (Evans-Pritchard, Radcliffe Brown), history, and economics (Keynes, Marx, Friedman) and many others.

The state as an overarching, omnipotent and omnipresent phenomenon, availing itself wherever human collectivity prevails, is perhaps the most common and uncontested political organisation humans have constructed. Moreover, in the wake of the Peace of Westphalia, signed in 1648, the state has become the most significant symbol of people’s sovereignty. It is, therefore, inevitable that the study of state formation engages various social science disciplines, cultural studies, history and economics because it touches all aspects of the life of a society.

Nation formation is about the construction of society, which in a broader sense concerns state-society relations. State formation, however, pertains to the political organisation of society, represented by its own state. The various disciplines stemming from their core subject elements engage in one or another aspect of state formation. Frequently, state formation is perceived as a core subject of political science. Nonetheless, the inexorable or intimate relationship between state formation and nation formation warrants the involvement of as many disciplines as possible.

What is common to all the disciplines that depict state formation is that they are informed by Western epistemology and ontology, which spring from a specific and particularistic historic, economic, social, cultural, political and philosophical experience and tradition. In the process, however,

this body of knowledge is pushed beyond the horizon to assume universality. This benchmark is then employed to evaluate non-Western societies and states. Contingent on this benchmark, then, the non-Western state is normatively evaluated based on whether it qualifies for entry into the world of statehood. Those who pass the test—very few, if any at all—can join the club. Those who fail the test are bestowed with the unenviable label of tribal organisation. Accordingly, when a state in a non-Western setting fails to achieve the benchmark, it is invariably given various epithets and labels such as failed state, weak state, fragile state, patrimonial state, predatory state, kleptocratic state, criminal state, de-/uninstitutionalised state (Hyden 2013; Christensen and Laitin 2019; Acemoglu and Robinson 2013; Bayart 2009; Migdal 1988).

All these epithets demonstrate how scholars—particularly Western scholars—employ Western-centric concepts without any attempt of historicisation and contextualisation, and in an ahistorical and apolitical manner (cf. Mamdani 2012). Moreover, it is also a demonstration of how they simply reflect the epistemic orientation of the scholars who employ them, rather than serving as tools to explain, analyse, interpret and understand postcolonial African societies on their own merit and context, treating them as an appendage of Western societies. Any attempt to establish an Africa-centric discourse, narrative, knowledge, process, history or philosophy of state formation has so far failed to take root.

In the linear methodological model of explanation of state formation, colonial ‘ship’ was employed in colonial state formation in Africa. Colonial authorities in the colonised societies, stemming from state models at home and instrumentalising the technology of state formation in Europe, began to shape and construct colonised societies in the image of Europe (Tilly 1975; Rokkan 1975; Smith 1983a). Subsequently, where the process of decolonisation took place, a new trajectory of state formation followed. In theory, this new trajectory was supposed to disentangle the state structure, which had been laid upon colonial society, from the decolonised society’s base. Unfortunately, it is contended, the postcolonial state retained alien structures. This is what Ruth First and others denote as the transference of power to Africans without reformation of the colonial structures. First (1983: 207) notes, ‘In the phase of decolonisation power was transferred, through virtually unchanged institutions of government, to largely hand-picked heirs. These heirs are the new ruling groups of Africa’.

This chapter seeks to examine theories of state formation. The chapter consists of seven sections: the following section analyses the evolution of the state; section three analyses structural-functionalist theory; section four, theories of the origin of the state; section five, the theory of the colonial origin of the state; and section six, diffusion theory. Section seven provides concluding remarks.

EVOLUTION OF THE STATE

The literature of the evolution of the state differentiates broadly between state formation and state building. This differentiation is founded on the depiction of two distinctive historical epochs in the genesis of the state. State formation relates to the sporadic evolution of the state, while state building refers to the purposive, intentional construction of the state by an elite (de Guevara 2012; Fukuyama 2012; Benjamin 2015). While the former refers to gradual, unintended, evolutionary formation and transformation driven by social, cultural, economic, scientific, technological, demographic and environmental transformations, the latter refers to intentional, actor-dictated social engineering, often modelled on an existing architecture and following the template of an existing state model. The differentiation follows the path of a first-stage formation and a second-stage construction. According to this conceptualisation, while state formation may pursue a process of uncharted, unguided and non-engineered inherent formation and transformation, state building, on the contrary, is led and guided by architects in pursuance of a model that *a priori* has already been sketched out. Economic, social, political, cultural and religious elites are involved in the purposive state building process.

The depiction of the historical evolution of the state identifies roughly two stages, differentiating:

between state building as a conscious, purposive and intentional effort of creating an apparatus of control, and state formation, as a historical process whose outcome is largely unconscious and contradictory process of conflicts, negotiations and compromises between diverse groups whose self-serving actions and trade-offs constitute the ‘vulgarisation’ of power. (Berman and Lonsdale 1992: 5, cited in de Guevara 2012: 5)

Others also make distinction between primary (nation) states and secondary (nation) states, where primary refers to unintentional state

formation and secondary to intentional state formation that imitates the model of the primary state (Benjamin 2015). While the primary corresponds to state formation, the secondary corresponds to state building. Francis Fukuyama also makes the distinction between what he designates pristine state formation and competitive state formation: 'Pristine state formation is the initial emergence of a state (or chiefdom) out of tribal-level society. Competitive formation occurs only after the first state gets going' (Fukuyama 2012: 81). It is important to note here that this differentiation is also embedded in a temporal dimension, which concerns the sequentiality of state formation and state building. The historical genealogy of the evolution of the state distinguishes between various state models: feudal, absolutist and state (Anderson 1979; Held et al. 1983; Held 1995). Another distinction relates to agrarian versus capitalist socioeconomic formation (Gellner 1983).

This assumption is premised on the conceptualisation that specific socioeconomic formation produces a corresponding political organisation, the state. In this theoretical frame of understanding, agrarian socioeconomic formation produces a feudal, absolutist state, whereas capitalist socioeconomic formation produces a modern capitalist state. The absolutist state is a prelude to the modern or bourgeois state, paving the way by introducing 'standing armies, a permanent bureaucracy, national taxation, a codified law, and the beginning of a unified market' (Anderson 1979: 17). Moreover, vernacularisation and the transition from Latin to national languages in Europe, which limited and defined state boundaries by processes of exclusion and inclusion, heralded the transition from absolutist states to nation states. While those who were included constituted the members of the nation, those who were excluded were considered foreigners (Rokkan 1975). Inclusion as a citizen is then coded, endowed with symbolic markers such as identity cards and passports; national flags and holidays are constructed, border checks are set up. All this enables the state to differentiate citizens from non-citizens and control them. Generally, this development is perceived to be an outcome of a 'triple revolutions' in the fields of economy, administration and culture (Smith 1986).

Another differentiation concerns whether the origin of the state is voluntaristic or coercive (Carneiro 1970: 733). This refers to whether the state emerged as a result of wars and by force or by the volition of people who recognised the need to create a state. Voluntaristic theories uphold that:

at some point in their history, certain people spontaneously, rationally, and voluntarily gave up their individual sovereignties and united with other communities to form a larger political unit deriving to be called a state. Of such theories the best known is the old Social Contract theory, which was associated especially with the name of Rousseau (Carneiro 1970: 733)

According to coercive theory, the rise of the state was due to force rather than enlightened self-interest (*ibid.*: 734). The forcibility of the evolution of the state is predicated on the efficacy of wars in finally producing a political organisation, the state. Tilly (1975) popularised the axiom that wars make states and states make war, which became an outstanding statement on the thesis of the forcibility of state emergence. Tilly (1992: 14) depicted the evolution of the state as:

Men who controlled concentrated means of coercion (armies, navies, police forces, weapons, and their equivalent) ordinarily tried to use them to extend the range of population and resources over which they wielded power. When they encountered no one with compatible control of coercion, they conquered; when they met a rival, they made war.

It is argued that coercion is used as a form of institutionalised sanction (Wright 1977: 380). Its corollary is that states are engaged in institutionalised sanction; conversely, institutional sanction also contributes to the gradual institutionalisation of the state. In this tradition, the theoretical assumption is that institutional coercion makes states, while states manufacture institutional coercion—that is to say, wars.

Classical sociology, as a science of society (Comte 2012 [1884]; Spencer 1898; Montesquieu 2001 [1748]; Durkheim 1984) strenuously endeavoured to construct theories that explain the genesis, evolution, formation and transformation of society (Coser 1971). The explanation of the construction of society gradually began to be embedded in the complex processes of state formation, giving rise to the connotation of the nation state. These sociological efforts spurred at least three theories of societal formation that came to be associated with classical sociology: (1) social conservative structural functionalism; (2) radical structural functionalism; and (3) interpretative cultural sociology.

The social conservative structural-functionalist strand is chiefly represented by Durkheim (1984). Durkheim's conception of the evolution of society is represented by notions of density and concentration of communities that propelled them from a state of mechanical solidarity to one

of organic solidarity. Mechanical solidarity represents undifferentiated, unspecialised, amorphous communities performing the same simple functions (ibid.: 127–28). They are supposed to be analogous to single-cell animals, where every function is executed within the same cell. Arguably, a single-cell animal evolves into a complex multicellular animal, where there emerges specialisation of functions.

According to this theory, a number of cells form tissues; the collection of tissues forms organs; and various organs form a system—an organism. This biological process is supposedly replicated in the formation of society, the progression of human development following a similar pattern. The atomic individuals—equivalent to cells—morph into communities. Communities at village level may be aggregated into a district or province level, which may eventually evolve into a national level. Through Durkheim's mechanisms of density and concentration, communities become larger and more complex, leading to specialisation and differentiation of functions, creating organic solidarity.

The characteristic features of organic solidarity are the transformation of segmentary, amorphous and acephalous communities into a highly specialised, differentiated and centralised society. This type of society is driven by differentiation of and specialisation in skills, knowledge and expertise, whereby individuals and groups fulfil different but complementary functions (ibid.: 132). One group may engage in farming, another in hunting, another in artisan work, yet another in fighting, etc. The aggregation of all functions constitutes society. It is at the level of organic solidarity that societies or nations are created. The dialectics of differentiation and complementarity constitute modern societies. The process is invariably denoted as a transformation from agrarian to industrial societies (Gellner 1983), from *Gemeinschaft* to *Gesellschaft* (Tönnies 1887). The instrumentality of political revolution in the construction of society (nation) is vividly demonstrated in the examples of the French and American revolutions producing the first nation states (Wimmer and Feinstein 2010: 764).

The creation of a nation, in turn, necessitated the gestation of a political organisation called the state. It is believed that within the confinement of a territory, through the centralised exercise of power several communities will form an autonomous state (Carneiro 1970; Rokkan 1975; Tilly 1975; Richmond 2013). For Aristotle, too, the evolution of the state is a natural development that ensues from the logical evolution of human beings. This evolution follows a pattern that is represented by the growth

and expansion of the family, where the emergence of several families constitutes a village, and the growth and expansion of a village into several villages give rise to the formation of a state. Arguing along the same lines Everson explicates:

when several families are united, and the association aims at something more than the supply of daily needs, the first society to be formed is the village. And the most natural form of the village appears to be that of a colony from the family, composed of the children and the grandchildren... The culmination of the process is the state itself, which comes into existence when 'several villages are united in a single complete community, large enough to be nearly or quite self-sufficing'. (Everson 1988: xvii)

Radical structural functionalism, represented by Marx, takes a materialist stand in the formation of societies. Historical materialism as a theoretical and philosophical epistemology, unlike conservatism, which advocates the primacy of ideas (Stanford University 2022), proposes material development over historical epochs as driving human development and progress. According to historical materialism, human development is stratified into different stages: primitive communism, slavery, feudalism, capitalism and communism (Marx and Engels 2006; Tabor 1995). Every stage on the historical trajectory represents a specific stage of development with a corresponding political organisation. The two component elements defining every concomitant society are the base and the superstructure. While the base will roughly constitute the material foundation of society, the superstructure is a reflection of the base and constitutes politics, power, ideology, etc. According to Tabor (1995: 2):

Marx and Engels analysed human society as divided into a material base (or basis), and superstructure that rests on it. The base is made up of the instruments of production (machines, tools, raw materials), the social classes, chiefly the exploiting and labouring classes, of the particular society, and the relations between these classes. The superstructure consists of political and cultural institutions, including the state, churches, schools, etc., as well as corresponding ideational realms: Politics, religion, science, art, etc. The state is a major, if not the major, element of this superstructure.

A change in material foundation of the base eventually drives change in the superstructure, propelling the system to a higher level of development

and societal formation. A feudal socioeconomic formation is transformed into a capitalist one. While in the former, land and serf labour are juxtaposed, in the latter, capital and wage labour are juxtaposed. In the former, the class constellation consists of lords and serfs or peasants, while in the latter it consists of capitalists and the proletariat. The logic of the argument is that state formation is a reflection of respective socioeconomic formation. This development supposedly follows Marx's five stages of development: 'primitive communism, slave-owning society, feudalism and capitalism... [with] socialism as a promise' (Elsenhans 1996: 35). This process is probably driven dialectically, where the seeds of negation for the emergence of the new are contained in the womb of the old system. At the same time, every stage is represented by two main classes. Exceptions are primitive communism and communism, which are presumed to be classless societies. Indeed, there is ontological circularity where the end returns to the origin, starting with a classless society and ending with one. Moreover, primitive society was believed to be a stateless society, and communism will be stateless pursuant to the withering away of the capitalist state. Philosophers and thinkers of socialism propounded utopianism, where the human individual would live in absolute freedom and harmony with nature guided by the principle of 'From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs' (Marx 1975: 87). In this conception, the political economy governing society is not dictated by the principles of market supply and demand, but by needs and ability. Human activity is, then, expressed in the balanced allocation of time 'for earning one's livelihood', leisure, intellect pursuits and hobbies. Marx was quoted as saying:

society regulates the general production and thus makes it possible for me to do one thing today and another tomorrow, to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, rear cattle in the evening, criticize after dinner, just as I have a mind, without ever becoming hunter, fisherman, cowherd, or critic. (McLellan 2000: 185)

This is often conceptualised as a critique of the political economy of capitalism.

Production of surplus value eventually engenders a group in society that expropriates the surplus value, while others remain propertyless. This emergence of haves and have-nots eventually created classes (slavery:

slaves and slave owners; feudalism: serfs and landlords; capitalism: bourgeoisie and proletariat) (Anderson 1979; Engels 2004). The classes engage in a constant struggle to expropriate production and the means of production. Whoever succeeds in appropriating the means of production becomes the master class. This class struggle propels society to a higher stage of development, until a classless society is achieved. Therefore, for Marxism it is the struggle for the means of production and surplus value that propels society forward and drives human progress.

The contradiction and contestation of the classes necessitated the emergence of the state. The purpose of the state is to moderate the tension and struggle between the classes so that they do not end up destroying each other (Tabor 1995). However, the state is perceived as the executive committee of the bourgeois class and serves as an instrument for economic and political domination. Marxism, therefore, displays inherent contradictions: on the one hand, the state is perceived as a repressive expression of the master class; on the other, it is expected to stand above classes. Another contradiction is that Marxism is vigorously against the state, yet advocates for proletarian state dictatorship, albeit a transient one. In the same vein, the state is seen as the vehicle to abolish the state: the state withers away in a classless society (Tabor 1995).

The third theory of societal formation is Weber's interpretative cultural sociology. According to Weber, society is a product of culture. Societal formation, therefore, follows its idiosyncratic cultural development and specificity. As a demonstration of this thesis, Weber (1992) explains why East Asia was not able to develop capitalism. Weber claimed that while Protestant work ethic enabled the production of capitalist societies, thereby paving the way for the emergence of the modern state, the culture in the Far East hindered the development of capitalist society, thus hampering the development of the modern state (Weber 1948).

These three theoretical strands—social conservative structural functionalism, radical structural functionalism and interpretative cultural functionalism—seek to explain the formation of society.

STRUCTURAL-FUNCTIONALIST THEORY

The structural-functionalist theory of state formation stems from both Marxist and liberal philosophical and theoretical traditions. The central assumption of structural-functionalist theory is that society is a set of interdependent systems:

The theory rests on an organic analogy that likens a social system to a physical body, in which each subsystem is necessary to maintain the proper functioning of the entire organism. From a functionalist point of view, the key to understanding a social subsystem is to trace its function in the working of the whole. (Calhoun et al. 2002: 341)

The whole constitutes the overall structure and functionality of that structure, which epitomises the proper construction of society and formation of the state. According to structural-functionalist theory, the diversification and complexity of society in terms of both structure and functions generated hierarchically stratified social systems and subsystems, and laid the foundation for the formation of the modern state. Of course, evidently the theory is based on Western historical, ontological and epistemological experiences. The Western-centred theory of state formation was then thought to have been exported to Africa through the colonial machinery and grafted onto the African body politic (Tilly 1975).

The central tenets of structural-functionalist theory can be presented as follows. While the structural envisions stratification of a system and its internal relations, the functionalist approach purports that the system serves society. In coalescing, they explain how structures and inherent relations functionally serve society. Moreover, some argue ‘that changes in structure cannot occur without changes in functions and that increases in size of social units necessarily bring in their wake progressive differentiations in social activities’ (Coser 1971: 97).

The sociological tradition of transformation, in evolutionary stages, reflecting consecutive epochs, feudalism, absolutism and revolution, expounds the formation process of a modern state (Poggi 1978). What guides and defines the formation process, the structural and functional evolution, is the simultaneous differentiation and metamorphosis that eventually give rise to the consolidation of the modern state. This simultaneous process of differentiation and centralisation also occurs through a process of exclusion and inclusion. Those perceived to be members in the territorially delimited entity are included, while those perceived to be alien are excluded (Rokkan 1975). Inclusion and membership are certified through the state issuing official documentation such as passports, identity cards, national personal numbers, etc. In doing so, the state is identifying, marking and defining its space where other states are not permitted to stay or make claims.

In this consolidation process, economic, cultural, social and political processes that lead to processes of reflexive epistemic and ideological transformation propel the formation of political organisations that reflect and represent society. It is this interplay between structures and functions as an explanatory model which came to be known as structural-functional theory. Institutional theory and social contract theory, discussed below, are part of structural-functional theory.

Institutionalist Theory

The institutionalist theory of state formation rests on the premise that the state, by definition, is an institution (Olaniyan 2017; Kamrava 2000; Poggi 1978). Poggi (1978: 1) notes that: ‘The modern State is perhaps best seen as a complex set of institutional arrangements for rule operating through the continuous and regulated activities of individuals acting as occupants of offices’. Therefore, state formation *par excellence* concerns the formation of institutions. Nevertheless, the institutional approach to state formation shows considerable variance. Referring to this variance, (Richmond 2013: 305) writes, ‘[the] state may be seen as a range of institutional and relational practices aiming at coherence, justice, and legitimacy, even though they develop in the context of power relations’.

The institutional conception of state formation is predicated on the assumption that the state is an embodiment of a set of institutions embedded in practices and an ethos guided by those institutional principles. Concomitantly, an institutionalised state escapes a personified and personalised manner of doing business. Political exercises then boil down to the binary of institutionalisation versus personification. In adhering to a structural-functional premise, then, a state could be conceptualised as an institution *par excellence*, as an overarching system that is divided into subsystems whose component elements include judiciary, legislature and executive performing distinct but interdependent functions.

Social Contract Theory

Social contract theory is predicated on the assumption or conceptualisation that a symmetrical rapprochement between state and society as two equal partners in the sociopolitical configuration develops over time (Mentan 2010: 20). Normatively, this symmetry is based on the division

of labour, where the interests and responsibilities of the respective partners are diligently accommodated and constitute a necessary prerequisite for each other. As mentioned earlier, the social contract, functionally and structurally, is supposed to engender balance and equilibrium in state-society relations. Properly consummated, nation formation produces a democratic and representative state that abides by and respects the social contract, where the state duly fulfils its responsibilities. Such responsibilities primarily concern service delivery. A state that delivers services earns respect, acknowledgement and legitimacy from society, as fulfilment of the other dimension of the social contract. Harnessing the dual dimensions of the social contract—service delivery and conferring legitimacy—constitute the cardinal mission of state formation.

Social contract theorists such as Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau depict the transition from a state of nature to a state of culture as having led to the emergence of the state. The state of nature, for these scholars, corresponds to a lack of government and law to guide human behaviour (Laskar 2013). For Hobbes, the state of nature was a dark age and utter chaos, characterised by a war of all against all. To avoid the state of nature, humans found it necessary to invent a political organisation called the state (Hobbes 1962). For Locke and Rousseau, however, the state of nature was a state of liberty, a golden age of happiness and equality. Rousseau believed the invention of property pronounced humanity's fall from grace. The state of nature was pre-political, with all sorts of deficiencies (Laskar 2013). To correct the deficiencies and gain certain common benefits, people had to voluntarily surrender some of their freedom, liberty and sovereignty to a higher authority: the general will (Mouritz 2010; Ritchie 1891). In short, the central tenet of social contract theory is grounded in the binary conception of delivery and legitimacy:

the state (or Leviathan) through its monopoly of force guarantees each citizen basic security. The state can provide other kinds of public goods as well, like property rights, roads, currency, uniform weights and measures, and external defense, which citizens cannot obtain on their own. In return, citizens give the state the right to tax, conscript, and otherwise demand things of them. (Fukuyama 2012: 82)

A state incapable of delivering basic provisions is, then, condemned to suffer from lack of legitimate entitlements. A broken reciprocity constitutes the root cause of crisis of many states.

THEORIES OF THE ORIGIN OF THE STATE

The first state is believed to have emerged around 4,000 BC (Carneiro 1970: 733). According to Wright (1977: 386), the state ‘emerged in Greater Mesopotamia – the watersheds of the Tigris, Euphrates, and Karun Rivers – at the beginning of the Uruk Period approximately 3700 B.C.’. That classical scholars such as Aristotle saw the state as ‘natural’ does not require explanation (Everson 1988). Later developments and studies, however, demonstrate that people lived not in states but in villages or tribes that made the state less natural (Carneiro 1970: 734).

The two most influential theories of the origin of state are voluntaristic and coercive (*ibid.*). Strands of the voluntaristic theory abound, including social contract theory, automatic theory, hydraulic theory (irrigation), etc. Automatic theory claims that the invention of agriculture automatically generated surplus food production, which in turn led to division of labour. Occupational specialisation engendered political integration, integrating previously independent communities into a state (*ibid.*: 733). Durkheim (1984) argues along these lines when in his organic solidarity he talks about how density, concentration, specialisation and hierarchisation propelled humans to a higher and organic organisation.

Coercive theory has recently gained prominence, dethroning voluntaristic theory. Nevertheless, the presumption is that although war is a necessary condition for the genesis of the state, it is not sufficient on its own. It needs to be complemented by other conditions. One of the complementarities is environmental circumscription theory. Briefly, this theory claims that war dictated by shortage of land has more prominence in state formation than where there is an abundance of land. According to abundance of land theory, those vanquished will simply move to other places, whereas in the case of a dearth of land and prevalence of a high density of people the defeated population has to be subjugated, which necessitates an exercise of power, leading to state formation. Supply is not matched by demand. The conquest of villages by stronger ones, followed by stronger chiefdoms conquering weaker ones, eventually producing larger centralised kingdoms, is presumed to spur state formation. The

creation of larger kingdoms in turn may necessitate decentralisation for administrative purposes (Carneiro 1970: 736; Fukuyama 2012).

Another condition, directly related to territorial centralisation and administration, is political evolution theory. Territorial aggregation, expansion and centralisation required the administration of conquered people within the confinement of a territory (Fukuyama 2012). Those who showed outstanding performance in war were rewarded by being appointed to political office to carry out the administration. The individuals who emerged as victors in the war with the ruler and his kinsmen constituted the upper class, while the losers formed the lower class. In this way, war contributed to the rise of social classes (Carneiro 1970: 735).

Resource concentration theory is another attempt to explain the genesis and formation of the state. Concentration of resources generates greater density of population, which eventually leads to competition and war due to scarcity of resources. This contributes to political evolution as political integration beyond the village level and different sociopolitical groups emerge (Wright 1977).

Another factor that has to be accounted for in the rise of the state is the theory of social circumscription, defined by the emergence of a high population density in a specific space. This density will, eventually, lead to resource scarcity. High population density has advantages for attack and defence. Population density coupled with resource distress increase the likelihood of war for land (Fukuyama 2012). Concomitantly, the likelihood of state formation increases immensely. This coalesces with Durkheim (1984)'s definition of density and concentration as an explanatory factor in the evolution of modern societies. This is decisive in the transformation from mechanical to organic solidarity (*ibid.*).

According to Carneiro (1970), circumscription theory, in its broadest dimension, goes long way in explaining the origin of the state. Circumscription leads to the concentration of people, which may in turn lead to a scramble for resources—particularly land—and consequently to war. Frequent wars become unavoidable where there is a high concentration of people. In a less circumscribed area—for instance, where villages are dispersed—the wars occur less frequently, because it is possible for people to retreat and escape, but also because the scramble for resources is less acute. It is believed that circumscription, by intensifying war, provides a strong impetus for political development.

Finally, territorial control presupposes a number of functional enabling measures that include organising armed forces, policing, taxation, administration and bureaucracy (Carroll 2009: 556; Tilly 1975, 1992). Furthermore, territoriality, or territorialisation, is intimately related to sovereignty. State sovereignty is manifested in the emergence of territorial circumscription, where territorialisation as a modern phenomenon assumed one of the significant defining criteria of statehood. Sovereignty is understood as the unchallenged exercise power and the ‘right to determine the framework of rules, regulations and policies in a given territory and to govern accordingly’ (Burns 1999: 176).

THEORY OF THE COLONIAL ORIGINS OF THE STATE: THE BASTARD STATE

There is general consensus that the contemporary state in Africa is a product of colonialism. The foundation of the consensus is the very fact that the entire continent, with the exception of Ethiopia, fell under European colonisation, which fundamentally reconfigured societies in ways that never paid attention to existing structures, and sociocultural politico-economic realities and contexts (Lewis 1983; Smith 1983a; Araoye 2014). Many Western scholars also make the controvertible assertion that nation states did not exist in precolonial Africa. The assertion emanates from the contention that African societies were still tribal where their level of development could not allow the evolution of a nation state. It was commonly contended: ‘It would have made no sense in tribal societies because such societies were and are stateless, and the ambition to unify the national culture and the state would therefore have been incoherent’. In Gellner (1983)’s conception, only nations would construct states. This led to the contention that the colonial state bore the responsibility for constructing a nation, thus the connotation of state-nation (Smith 1983a).

The label bastard state implies the nature of the postcolonial state that is a conflation of precolonial and colonial politico-economic and sociocultural edifices. This disposition renders the state in Africa highly volatile, instable, precarious and dysfunctional. These pathologies are symptoms of the dislocation of the colonial state and its placement in an alien environment, which hinders it from amicable coexistence with society. The colonial state was exported from its spatio-temporal origin and grafted onto a completely different societal setting to achieve specific objectives on behalf of the mother state. The mismatch of the colonial state in an

African societal setting, inducing a bastard conflation, marks the tenuous legitimacy of the colonial state. This contested legitimacy can be described through three benchmarks: (1) objectives, (2) mechanisms and (3) consequences. The literature attributes the objectives of colonialism as being to obtain cheap raw materials, markets for finished goods and a cheap labour force (Mentan 2010: 143, 160); and to achieve world domination or fulfil a civilising mission (Paris 2002).

The mechanisms by which the colonial state was grafted onto African societies, shipped via the colonial ship, entailed remoulding colonial societies according to a Western model, which was christened as a civilising mission. Some of the primary consequences of the civilising mission can be summarised in five analytical variables: (1) territorial integration; (2) politico-legal integration; and (3) socioeconomic integration; leading to (4) the fostering of a common historical experience; and (5) a common political culture (preferably in the Western mould) (cf. Bereketeab 2007: 40–45). The development of these phenomena paved the way for the evolution of the (modern) colonial state, though how this colonial state would fit the society was of less concern to the colonial authorities.

The very first act that laid the foundational cornerstone of the colonial state was territorial integration. Following the Berlin Conference of 1884–1885, where the European powers decided how to divide up Africa among themselves, territories were delineated and demarcated, indicating the possessions of the European powers. Referring to the export of territoriality to Africa, Smith (1983a: 50) says:

The European state-makers were highly successful in imposing the territorial aspect of the Western state on the African demographic and political map, and hence they were able to draw sharp boundaries, not only in political and economic reality, but also in the psychic identity and cultural vision of the new elites.

Within those incipient territories a second act was to take place, politico-legal integration. This represented an administrative and governance system that further consolidated the territories as the possessions of the respective colonial powers, as well as transplanting the political and legal systems of Europe; and the consolidation of administrative entities that were English-, French- and Portuguese-speaking (Mentan 2010: 143). This was further enhanced by socioeconomic integration. The emergence of urban and capitalist economy-based social groups bearing

the marks of incipient socioeconomic integration buttressed the colonial state:

Colonial administrations were much more centralised than anything Africa had known before. They were centred on a capital city, exchanged goods in a unified economic market system, promulgated state-wide laws and regulations, and taxed and conscripted the subject populations across the whole territory. (Smith 1983a: 50)

Eventually, this integration played a pivotal role in fostering a common political history embedded in an emergent political culture, supposedly cementing the colonial state. These integrational premises are presumed to have produced a sort of social and territorial centralisation and homogenisation (Seton-Watson 1977; Rokkan and Urwin 1982; Gellner 1983; Smith 1983a, 1986; Anderson 1991).

One of the colonial legacies is the attempt to achieve standardisation and homogenisation, with a degree of variance according to state structure. The degree of variance stems from the relative difference between respective colonial states, notably French, British, Portuguese, Belgian and Italian, and their history, philosophy, culture, etc. The variance of state structure and form displayed by the respective states at home was also introduced into their respective colonies. This was particularly manifest in direct and indirect rule, which had implications for state and nation formation (Mazrui 1983). Mazrui is of the opinion that Britain's tradition of political conservatism, which led to the principle of indirect rule, demonstrated a proclivity for state building in its colonies, while France's radical political tradition was inclined to direct rule and a policy of assimilation, which contributed to nation building (*ibid.*: 27–28).

Yet, in general, a homogenising process along Western lines was carried out across the African continent. What were the implications of this homogenisation process for Africa? Homogenisation of colonialism through mechanisms of socialisation (Henderson 2015) in the context of the Western state model was conducted by colonial states in societies that fell victim to the states' machinations. The socialisation process, understood as colonial social engineering, resulted in the transplantation of European state models into the social fabric of social and political structures based on tribes, kingdoms, chiefs and villages. It amounted to injecting antibodies into the body politic of the colonised societies.

This was to affect the postcolonial states' functionality in that institutional governance reflected the colonial political edifice, giving rise to the neopatrimonialism of the postcolonial society (Henderson 2015: 112). This is presumed to have induced nominal independence (Henderson 2015: 117; Ekeh 1983; Davidson 1992).

The literature on state formation advances the proposition of the exportation of the Western state model via colonial ship to the colonial societies (Tilly 1975; Smith 1983a). Colonialism is presumed to have engendered state systems that replicated European state models (Carroll 2009: 563; Ekeh 1983; Tilly 1975). The literature also describes the implications of transplantation onto existing structures and institutions. The structures the colonial state introduced to African societies were highly centralised. Even the indirect rule the British introduced in some of their colonies was highly centralised. Where chiefs were supposed to run local governance, they were under tight control from the colonial governor, who in turn was under the control of the imperial state at home (Tom 2017: 20–22). This produced what (Mamdani 2017: 54) describes as decentralised despotism, the conflation of indigenous and colonial structures and relations:

It is the chief who has the right to make a bylaw governing his locality, who assesses the value of your petty property and therefore how much tax you must pay, who come to collect that tax, who fine you if you fail to pay that tax, who jails you if you fail to pay the tax and the fine, who decides where you labor when in jail, and who releases you upon termination of the sentence. The chief is the petty legislator, administrator, judge, and policeman all in one. Every moment of power – legislative, executive, judicial, and administrative – is combined in this one official. Here there is no question of any internal check and balance on the exercise of authority, let alone a check that is popular and democratic. The chief is answerable only to a higher administrative authority. An unwritten norm of indirect rule was that the lower authority must never be short-circuited. To entertain any complaints behind the chief's back would be to humiliate him. To so weaken a subordinate officer and compromise his prestige would be to endanger patiently accumulated gains in years of administrative labor. Therefore nothing must be done that would bring disrespect to authority. It is the agent of this fused authority, this clenched fist, who is usually called the chief. To the peasant, the person of the chief signifies power that is total and absolute, unchecked and unrestrained.

Ekeh (1983: 9) also notes that: ‘A major consequence of colonialism was that a new opportunity was offered for expansion in precolonial societal structure. But the resultant expansion led to the growth of certain institutions, the retardation of some, and the shedding of others’. Precolonial formal institutions, structures and authorities were relegated to informality (Kaplan 2009), which produced institutional cleavages and schisms. This, in turn, fostered institutional duality, predicated on power asymmetry in both an operational sense and a cultural and symbolic sense, where indigenous institutions were declared inferior (Ekeh 1983; Mamdani 1996).

The postcolonial state is construed in various ways. Reflecting on this, Richmond (2013: 306) opines, ‘this modern state (and particularly the postcolonial state) is a hybrid international, (neo)liberal and local, customary, identity-oriented, national-liberation-focused, modernizing construct, where power is exercised from the local to the international’.

DIFFUSION THEORY

Diffusion theory is predicated on the central assumption that the state model that was constructed in Western Europe departed from its temporal-spatial origin and spread to other regions of the world. The historical trajectories of regions may vary considerably. This variability in diffusion might assume a coercive mechanism or voluntary evolutionary expansion. However, it is argued that regardless of the form of diffusion, eventually it assumes universality. This conferred an omnipresence and omnipotence on the European state model that was constructed from a specific historical, cultural, social, political, philosophical and ideological experience, development and civilisation (Smith 1983a; Badie 2000). This Euro-centric conception of the origin of the state has never entertained an alternative epistemic and ontological origin, though history clearly demonstrates the state emerged first in China (Fukuyama 2012).

The diffusion mechanism through which the European state model was conducted to Africa was through colonial ships (Tilly 1975; Davidson 1992). Colonialism, in its endeavour of conquest, domination and a civilising mission, landed on the ‘dark’ Continent equipped with a toolkit to assemble the furniture of the Western state in the fallow land of Africa. The state carpenters—colonial authorities—were given the mandate or rather the instructions by the mother state to diligently and masterfully replicate it in colonial Africa.

Its practical implication, the colonial legacy of state formation, as was earlier highlighted, can be appraised through three analytical variables of integration: territorial, politico-legal and socioeconomic. A brief explication of the three analytical variables will suffice. Territorial integration refers to the first building block laid down where the borders of the colonial state were delineated, assuming international legal and conventional status. The legal and formal foundation of territorial integration can be traced to the Berlin Conference of 1884–1885 where the gathered European imperial powers simply cut and assembled territories on the map, indicating their new acquisitions to themselves and the world. Those units consisting of conglomerates of people formed the territorial foundation of the current states (Mentan 2010: 165).

Territorial integration created through this scramble for Africa constituted the first stepping stone towards contemporary state formation in Africa. Therefore, the state in Africa is invariably designated as a territorial state. Territoriality as the mechanism of delineation and delimitation of space in which certain people reside constitutes an entity where a political organisation (the state) is set up and recognised as exercising legitimate authority over the territory and people within it. Moreover, the territoriality, albeit constructed by imperial powers, assumed an international legal personality, with the right to interact in the international state system. The representation and agency in that arena—imperial powers or local agents acting on their behalf—did not matter much.

Using territorial integration as a springboard, colonial state formation advanced the political and legal structures, institutions, authorities, statutes, etc. that gave the colonial state its perimeters, form and substance. Politico-legal integration as a second step in the contemporary state formation process endowed territories their political and legal institutional form and context. Following decolonisation, the departing colonial powers made sure those politico-legal edifices remained entrenched after they had left. The nationalist leaders who inherited the colonial entities were obliged to maintain the politico-legal edifices wittingly or unwittingly. Accordingly, politico-legal arrangements, institutions and symbols of the British, French, etc. defined the postcolonial politico-legal system (*ibid.*: 192).

The third step, socioeconomic integration, further propelled the diffusion of the colonial state formation process. In this dimension, an emergent capitalist socioeconomic formation contributed to some sort of social and economic integration. Modern social and economic classes

developed around urban and market centres that were to assume power in the postcolonial era (Ekeh 1975). The incipience of an inchoate bureaucratic class socialised in the colonial socioeconomic and politico-philosophical ideas mediated through the medium of Western education ensured the transfer of the system to the postcolonial social fabric. This urban-based bureaucratic class alienated itself from the overwhelmingly rural majority. This generated what Ekeh (*ibid.*) called two publics, which had serious implications for the postcolonial state formation process.

Decolonisation and postcolonial national actors never tried to curb the diffusion of the Western state model. On the contrary, postcolonial leaders simply perfected and perpetuated the model. According to Badie (2000: 57):

At least three axes of this process can be counted: the diffusion of the principle of territoriality, the diffusion of normative systems strongly marked by the Western conception of law, and, finally the diffusion of international rules of conduct.

Before granting independence to the colonies, the colonial powers wanted to make sure the system they constructed remain intact after their departure. In cases where independence was achieved through peaceful means, particularly in the British case, a brief so-called transitional period was designed. During this period, in order to ensure the insertion and entrenchment of the system of the colonial power, elections were organised for the first time; pluralist electoral liberal democracy was injected into the soon-to-be independent states. As soon as the colonial powers departed, however, the system simply crumbled, which indicated the mismatch between the superstructure and the base (the elite and the masses).

The discourse of state crisis in postcolonial Africa rightly attributes the problem to the colonial origins and perpetuation of the state model. The failure to strike a balance between the two legacies of postcolonial Africa explain the predicament the continent is encountering. The two legacies of the colonial and indigenous precolonial structures brought forward into the postcolonial period render the state formation process precarious.

DECOLONISATION AS AN EXERCISE OF THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION AND STATE FORMATION

Decolonisation represented the end of colonial state formation. It heralded the dawn of a reorientation and reconstruction of the state formation project, where the indigenous people would take control as its owners and agents. Decolonisation, as a legal instrument, was embedded in international law and UN conventions (Kuwali 2015), conferring the right of people under the colonial yoke to decide their future destiny, and assume a proper place in the international association of sovereign states. Unfortunately, this right was not given to everyone with identical colonial histories. Discrimination was practised arbitrarily, without any legal or theoretical foundation or justification. Indeed, justifications were blatantly fabricated to satisfy the geostrategic interests of powerful nations, which inflicted great pain on the victims. We can illustrate the legal and moral inconsistencies and double standards through the cases of Somaliland and Eritrea, taken as examples of national liberation state formation (Zhazbhay 2009; Farley 2010).

Both Somaliland and Eritrea were colonial creations, the former a British colony and the latter Italian. During the World War II, both territories briefly fell under Italian East Africa (Negash 1987). The defeat of Italy enabled Britain to regain the colony of Somaliland, assuming the administration of Eritrea until its destiny was decided by the UN. The fate of the two colonial territories diverged, with Britain playing an important role. Somaliland was permitted to consummate the right to self-determination enshrined in the decolonisation principle. It gained its independence on 26 June 1960. After only five days as an independent state, it decided to form a union with the Republic of Somalia upon the independence of the latter on 1 July 1960 (Ahmed 2015; Walls 2014; Bradbury 2008). Soon, people in Somaliland realised that it was a grave mistake to enter into a union with the south: 'It did not take long before the northern citizens of the Somali Republic became aware that the terms under which they had entered the union had been betrayed by politicians with agendas different from their own' (Duale 2015: 108). The regime of Siad Barre collapsed under the assault of various clan-based rebel groups in 1991. One of the rebel groups, the Somali National Movement (SNM), declared Somaliland independent, though it never received recognition for its unilateral declaration.

According to Somaliland authorities, it was an invocation of the exercise of the right to self-determination as enshrined in the principle of decolonisation. It remains to be seen, however, whether the right to self-determination can be exercised twice or what international law and theory has to say about that. The argument has been made that since Somaliland has proven to the world that it has established a stable, functioning and democratic state, it deserves recognition. Meanwhile, Eritreans claim they were denied the right to exercise self-determination. Their principled right was sacrificed for US geopolitical and geostrategic interests. Evidence for this is provided in a quote by then Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, addressing the UN Security Council in 1952:

From the point of justice, the opinion of the Eritrean people must receive consideration. Nevertheless, the strategic interest of the United States in the Red Sea basin and consideration of security and world peace makes it necessary that the country had to be linked with our ally, Ethiopia. (cited in Habte Selassie 1980: 39)

The cases of Somaliland and Eritrea demonstrate the ambiguities surrounding theories of decolonisation, the principle of self-determination and international law with regard to the right to statehood and state formation. Moreover, cases on the African continent and the world over provide ample examples of the problems caused by ambiguity and confusion.

CONCLUSION

This chapter set out to examine the theories, origins and evolution of the state and state formation, discussing different theoretical strands that engage in the genesis, evolution and expansion of states and state formation. The theories, models and routes discussed in this chapter analyse the evolution of societies from the lowest levels to the highly complex and differentiated forms and levels we observe today.

Classical sociology, as the science of society, depicts the construction of society and state. The mechanisms by which this occurs are invariably described in terms of the concentration, density, expansion, growth and centralisation of communities, villages and territories. They occur through internal dynamics and/or because of external influences; through peaceful

evolution and/or because of wars. Development, in turn, induced political, organisational, administrative and technological innovations, leading to the evolution of states and societies as we know them today.

The dominant literature explicates the development that induced the evolution of nation state formation as specifically European and impossible to replicate in Africa. Consequently, the Western state model grafted onto Africa through the vehicle of colonialism has been deemed unworkable. Therefore, many propose that the colonial machinery undergirding the construction of states in modern Africa should simply be discarded, and Africa should find its own way and model. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the mechanisms of density, expansion, growth and concentration of communities, villages and territories are still valid for all societies; so too the rationale of the theories, models and processes depicted in this chapter. Yet, it is of utmost importance to acknowledge and accept the realities that societies follow their own ideographic routes, histories and processes at their own pace, and build their own particularistic structures, cultures, institutions, mechanisms, practices, ethos, morals, beliefs and systems. Therefore, we can assert that application of these theories and models in different settings definitely displays variation, even within European settings.

The postcolonial state in Africa emerged as a hybrid, constituting legacies of colonial and precolonial history, indicating the specificity of Africa. It is of great importance to acknowledge that the dual legacy of colonial and precolonial institutions and the inability to manage it properly render the postcolonial state extremely precarious. This dual legacy produced an institutional duality that created a cleavage between urban-based, Westernised elites and rurally based majority masses. This duality and cleavage explain the crisis of the state in postcolonial Africa.

The postcolonial state failed to strike a balance between the colonial and precolonial structures, institutions, norms and values, which engendered unceasing crisis. But this was not because the general theories and models of state formation classical sociologists depicted were spatio-temporally specific. The debate whether the European model of state formation is applicable and conducive to Africa continues unabated. The work of Markakis et al. (2021) on the HOA is a recent addition to the body of work that rebukes the viability of the European model of state formation in Africa. Generally, to certain degree the debate is valid. But it is often a one-sided debate that fails to take into account that the colonial legacy—the European model—has become part of the African societal

fabric, which Africans are not able to scrape off and throw away. The challenge is how to strike a balance between the two legacies. Time is also of the essence: what took several centuries for Europe cannot be accomplished in decades in Africa. In addition, what makes state formation in Africa fraught with problems are the unfettered Western interventions that are still rampant. Africans were not allowed to initiate, design, implement or revise theories, models, concepts and methodologies on their own terms. Therefore, colonialism gave way to neocolonialism and interventionist neoliberalism.

Figure 2.1 is intended to illustrate the routes by which state formation in the HOA takes place. The proto-state model represents the state formation route in Ethiopia. It further demonstrates the development where the proto-state was succeeded by the Marxist state, which in turn was succeeded by the ethnic nationalist state. The colonial state route explicates state formation induced by colonisation. The colonial

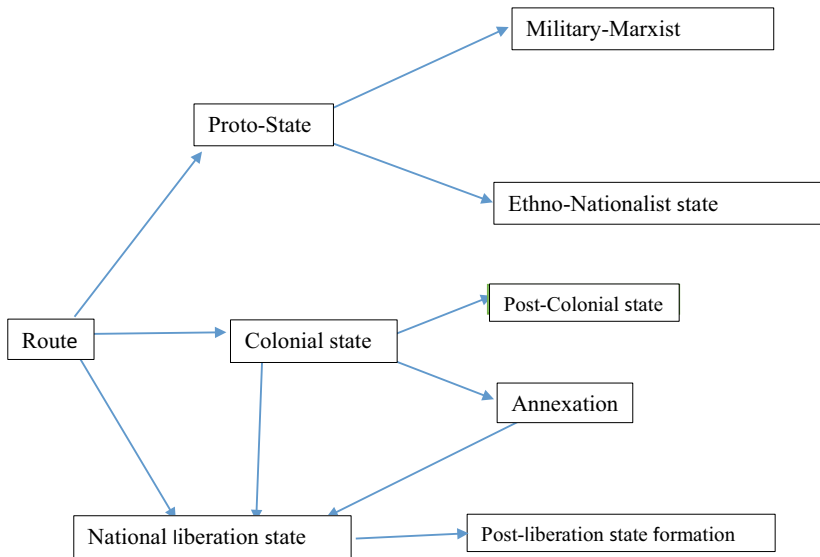


Fig. 2.1 Development of the state in the HOA (*Source* Author's own, based on the general literature)

state gave way either to the postcolonial nationalist state; or to annexation (Eritrea) or voluntary union (Somaliland)—these spawned national liberation movements, leading to post-liberation state formation.

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Proto-State Formation: Ethiopia

INTRODUCTION

Several dimensions make Ethiopia unique; but at the same time, there are dimensions that make Ethiopia ordinary. These complex features have attracted Western scholars—and scholarship—who have demonstrated great interest in the history, culture and civilisation of the country. Ethiopia is an embodiment of contradictions and paradoxes. It is old at the same time young. It evaded colonisation, but was involved in colonising. It claims thousands of years of statehood, but at the same time still strives towards the project of state building. It ranks itself among old nations, but at the same time, its nation-building process is extremely precarious. It claims to have an ancient civilisation, but at the same time demonstrates extreme backwardness. It purports there is strong unity among its peoples, but at the same time, it is fraught with social divisions and conflicts.

It is these paradoxes, which make the inclusion of Ethiopia in the Historical Sociology of State Formation interesting. In its presumed long history of existence as a state, Ethiopia has gone through a lot of turmoil. Particularly, in twentieth and twenty-first centuries the country experienced some of the bloody conflicts in the African continent related to identity and secessionism that question the legitimacy of the state. The mainstay underlying cause of the bloody wars concerns the nature and structure of the Ethiopian state. Representability and inclusiveness of the

state is highly questioned. In spite of the long history, the Ethiopian state, as any state in the HOA, is still in the formation process challenged by centrifugal forces. Different experiments of state formation, under a monarchy, a military-Marxist regime and an ethno-federalist regime were tested. Yet, the state formation process in Ethiopia as any state, new and old, in the HOA as this chapter would show is at a crossroads necessitating its study. The study of state formation in Ethiopia is of great significance because of its complex history, but also because the country is the powerhouse of this region. What happens in Ethiopia has huge implication to the region.

Ethiopia is one of only two countries in Africa to have escaped colonisation. The other, Liberia, was founded by freed enslaved people returning to Africa from the US (Moss 2007: 21, 24; Hyden 2013: 18–19). In the African setting, Ethiopia is perceived as the only proto-state. Proto-states are sometimes called ‘pristine states’ (Fukuyama 2012): states that were not creations of colonialism, and with claims to the originality and indigeneity of state formation, which can trace their roots to pre-history. Ethiopian mythology claims several millennia of statehood (Levine 2000; Marcus 2002).

It is incontrovertibly clear that the history of state formation in Ethiopia is characterised by constant expansion and contraction (Levine 2000; Markakis 2021). However, for some scholars it is also clear that modern Ethiopia is a product of the colonial era. Further, Ethiopia took part in the scramble for Africa (Zewde 2001; Gudina 2003; Bulcha 2002). It expanded through conquering the territory south of Abyssinia. By end of the nineteenth century, Ethiopia’s territory had grown four-fold (Markakis 2011). For many people in the south of the country, the Abyssinian expansion is construed as colonisation in the same way as what the Europeans did (Hassen 1990; Gudina 2003; Bulcha 2002). The survival of Abyssinia during the scramble for Africa was partly secured through self-propelled expansionist campaigns and partly through the shrewd political machinations of its leaders, which allowed them to engage with European imperial powers as equals (Rubenson 1978; Erlich 1996).

In one way or another, Ethiopia can claim a long history of state formation, yet the current configuration of the state is an outcome of the nineteenth century. Territory, people and political organisation are composite pillars of statehood and state formation. This rightly compels us to raise questions such as which territory constitutes the foundation of

3,000 years of continuous existence? Who are the people to be counted as part of that long history? How did political organisation transition from one formation to another? Where did it take place? And what were the trajectories that represented the long, continuous history of state formation? Answers to these questions would certainly clarify the nature, scope and content of the historical sociology of state formation in Ethiopia. The mysticism, elasticity, contraction and expansion of territoriality, people and political organisation (statehood) is a perennial mystery that still bedevils the process of the historical sociology of state formation in Ethiopia. Commensurate with the long history of statehood, a central question that puzzles scholars is why Ethiopia failed to construct stable, functional and representative state in the way that Europeans with long histories of statehood did.

Italy's venture to colonise Abyssinia ended in humiliating defeat for Italy in the Battle of Adwa in 1896 (Rubenson 1978; Erlich 1996; Jonas 2011). The Italian fascist invasion and occupation of Abyssinia in 1936 was in revenge for the humiliating defeat 40 years earlier, as well as to quench the Italians' thirst to colonise Abyssinia, which remained unsatisfied. The reinstatement of Emperor Haile Selassie to the throne following Britain's victory over Italy in 1941 secured the continuation of the Ethiopian proto-state. Haile Selassie's half-hearted attempt to modernise Ethiopian society sowed the seeds of potential dangers for the monarchy as well as state formation.

The first indication of these dangers surfaced in 1960, when brothers Brigadier General Mengistu Neway and Geremame Neway attempted an unsuccessful military coup (Zewde 2001: 211–212). A military coup in 1974 deposed monarchy, ending the 'Solomonic Dynasty' and the proto-state. The Dergue, the military junta that took power, carried out a radical transformation, particularly with regard to land rights. In addition, it radically changed social and class relations in Ethiopian society by fundamentally shaking the existing political economy and reconfiguring the state (Halliday and Molyneux 1981; Ottaway and Ottaway 1978). The 1974 Ethiopian revolution is compared with the Jacobin French Revolution, where profound social transformation took place. The comparison, perhaps, would fit well with regard to the state of terror both regimes perpetrated. The Dergue was deposed by a coalition of ethnic nationalist rebel movements in 1991, which led to another state reconfiguration. The Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) took power and reconfigured the state along ethnic federalist lines; but the

demise of the EPRDF in 2019 once again led to the need for state reconfiguration.

Ethiopia has undergone—and is still undergoing—major turmoil in its state formation process. At least, six stages in the formation and transformation of the Ethiopian state can be identified. In terms of temporality, these stages correspond to three epochs—monarchy, socialist-military-revolutionary state and ethnic federalist state: (1) the Axumite state (First–seventh centuries AD); (2) feudal state formation (Tenth–eighteenth centuries AD); (3) feudal bourgeois state formation (1889–1974); (4) Marxist revolutionary state formation (1974–1991); and (6) ethnic federalist state formation (1991–present).

This chapter seeks to analyse the indigenous process of state formation in Ethiopia. It is not about the history of Ethiopia; it is about the historical sociology of the process and the trajectory of state formation in Ethiopia. It is a depiction of the *longue durée* (long process) of the formation and transformation of society, stretching over various stages and historical epochs—ups and downs, contractions and expansions, stipulations and tribulations and myths and realities—in search of an ideal state, which represents an unceasing flux of societal foundation. Methodologically: ‘Process tracing is a fundamental tool of qualitative analysis which inherently analyses trajectories of change and causation, hence, what could be termed as static description in a building block in analysing the processes being studied’ (Cocodia 2018: 13).

The chapter consists of eight sections: the following examines the history of statehood in Ethiopia and the dynastic origin of the state; section three analyses “[The Emergence of the Modern State](#)”; section four, “[The Modernising Monarchy](#)”; and section five, “[The Revolutionary Socialist State](#)”. Section six discusses “[Rebellion, and Ethnic Nationalist and Ethnic Federalist State Formation](#)”; and section seven examines “[Post-EPRDF and Post-revolutionary Democracy State Formation](#)”. Section eight provides “[Concluding Remarks](#)”.

It should be clear from the very outset that the chapter is a sketch of the historical sociology of state formation in Ethiopia. By no means does it claim to provide an elaborate and detailed history of Ethiopia, which has already been thoroughly studied. The central concern of this chapter is the continuous reconfiguration of the state in Ethiopia.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF STATEHOOD: THE DYNASTIC ORIGIN OF THE STATE

The Ethiopian narrative and discourse make the claim to 3,000 years of statehood. The narrative also provides a genealogy of statehood that originates from a historical episode where the legendary Queen Makeda—or Sheba—had an affair with King Solomon of Israel, which led to her conceiving a child, later to be known as Emperor Menelik I, who founded the Solomonic Dynasty that was to reign in Ethiopia until 1974, apart from a brief period of interregnum under the Zagwe Dynasty (Levine 2000; Markakis 1974; Ullendorff 1973; Zewde 2001; Marcus 2002). This historiography is, however, as contested as any based on myth-making.

Ethiopian history is therefore riven by two strands of narratives: mythology construction and maintenance of the status quo on the one hand; and deconstruction and reconstruction of an alternative mythology on the other. For pan-Ethiopian nationalists, the continuous three-millennia existence of Ethiopian state formation is perceived to be as much a truth as the rising of the sun, while for ethnic nationalists the mythology is fabricated, as it is a historiography of expansionism and domination. However, one fact that remains constant is that state formation in Ethiopia, as in other countries in the region, is a project that has not yet been completed.

In the deliberation of the historical sociology of state formation in Ethiopia, we can discern two major periods, pre-modern and modern. Within the pre-modern, we can discern: (1) the Axumite period; (2) the Zagwe Dynasty; (3) attempted state formation under the Greater Ethiopia of the Amhara; and (4) the Zemene Mesafint ('Era of Princes') (1769–1855). The modern period contains: (1) the eighteenth-century unification period; (2) the period of feudal bourgeois imperial state formation; (3) the military-Marxist state formation; and (4) the ethnic federalist state formation.

At the peak of the pre-modern civilisation was the Axumite kingdom, whose epicentre was present-day Tigray, the highlands of Eritrea and port of Adulis on the Eritrean coast. The two institutional pillars that defined and composed Axumite state formation and glory were thus Axum as the seat of power and the port of Adulis as an outlet to the external world (Zewde 2001: 8). The era of Axum kingdom is believed to have stretched from the first century to the seventh century AD (Levine 2000; Marcus

2002; Zewde 2001). However, it is not made clear in this genealogical and historiographic narrative how a history and civilisation centred in Axum became appropriated by a narrative dominated by Amhara, Orthodox Christian Solomonic Dynasty-focused narrative and rationalising ideology of state formation. Under pressure from two directions, mainly Islam and the Beja kingdoms (people emanating for Egypt), the Axumite state declined. The expansion of Islam during the seventh and eighth centuries effectively cut Axum off from the outside world, particularly in terms of trade relations. In addition to the Islamic expansion, the Beja kingdoms that moved in from the north invaded Axum, bringing about its decline (Levine 2000: 70):

From about the middle of the seventh century, Aksum entered a process of decline. The rise of Islam and the subsequent disruption of the Red Sea trade sapped Aksum's source of life. Beja pressures from the north combined to force the Aksumite state to recoil further inwards. It was in these circumstances that the Agaw, hitherto subjugated, seized state power and inaugurated their eponymous dynasty, Zagwe. (Zewde 2001: 8)

The demise of Axum in the seventh century represented an eclipse and decline of a glorious history and civilisation. Consequently, the state was confined to the mountainous highlands and lost its access to the sea. So began several centuries of chaos and oblivion, extending to the period known as the *Zemene Mesafint* ('Era of Princes'), when various regional kings reigned over their respective regions without a central overarching state. This era is seen as an interregnum in the process of state formation, between the pre-modern state and the modern nineteenth century one. The decline of Axum also interrupted the line of the Solomonic Dynasty, the bearers of centralised state power.

The Agew people from central Ethiopia, in reaction to Axumite incursions and territorial expansion, pushed northwards and occupied Axum in the twelfth century—thus began the Zagwe Dynasty, which ruled for 135 years (Levine 2000: 71). The ascendance of the Zagwe Dynasty interrupted the mythical Solomonic descent-based state formation. It represented a deviation from founding Solomonic values, culture and symbols as depicted in Ethiopian historiographic literature. Region, religious institutions and symbols played important roles in the process of state formation of that era. The Zagwe Dynasty made '[its] deepest

imprint on Ethiopian history through the construction of eleven monolithic churches in Lalibela, named after one of the more famous of their kings' (Zewde 2001: 8). That infrastructure presented the specific characteristics of the Zagwe state formation.

The expansionist ambition of the Amhara kings and, in particular, control of the 'trade route linking the Gulf of Aden port of Zeila to the southern interior... pitted the Christian state against a string of Muslim principalities' (ibid.: 9). This eventually led to a series of clashes between Muslims and Christians. This was an example of war as state maker or state breaker. In the war between Muslims led by Ahmed Grag (a Somali leader) and the Abyssinians, external actors—Ottomans on the side of the Muslims and Portuguese on the side of Abyssinia—played a significant role in state formation in Abyssinia. The war was devastating, almost destroying Abyssinia (Levine 2000; Marcus 2002) and leading to a shrinking of the space for state formation in terms of resources and population. The Muslim assault was a formidable obstacle to empire-state formation. The defeat of the Christian kingdom paved the way for Oromo expansion, which changed the demography and political geography (Zewde 2001: 9). Despite the establishment of Gondar in 1636, however, the disintegration of the kingdom continued, ushering in the Zemene Mesafint (Zewde 2001: 10).

Faced with an existential threat, the Abyssinian emperor embarked on the total mobilisation of peasant society: 'Emperor Lebna Dengel mobilized a vast force from Tigray, Amhara, the Agew territories, Begemdir, Gojam, and Shewa and encamped about fifty kilometres east of what is now Addis Abeba' Marcus (2002: 32). Here, from a state formation perspective, we observe two things of great importance. The first is the ability of the emperor to galvanise society in the service of the state to fend off external invaders. The second is the level of maturity of the state to be able to elicit external actors' support in defending its territorial integrity. Both phenomena also indicate a level of institutional capacity. They also signify concentration, centralisation and hierarchisation of people and territory, essential elements of state formation.

Many observe that the decline of the Zagwe Dynasty heralded the 'restoration' of the Solomonic Dynasty; that is, the rise of the Amhara:

In 1270, the Zagwe were overthrown by Yekunno-Amlak, a chieftain of one of the subject peoples, the Amhara (then inhabiting the Wallo region). He inaugurated a dynasty which called itself 'Solomonic', to emphasize its legitimacy as opposed to the Zagwe, who were portrayed as usurpers. (Zewde 2001: 8–9)

The connection, in terms of descent, between Axumite Kingdom and the successors of Zagwe is not clear. The expansion of the Amhara in the fourteen and fifteenth centuries instigated the integration of Greater Ethiopia:

The Solomonid expansion of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries promoted the integration of Greater Ethiopia in two respects. It broadened the base of support for the political and cultural center of the emerging Ethiopian state by increasing the number of people in the highland plateau regions who identified with Solomonid kingdom and its Monophysite Christian religion. Beyond Tigray, Lasta, Angot, and Amhara, the only areas sustaining a precarious identification with the center during the Zagwe Dynasty, the core territory of the kingdom was extended to many other areas which came to speak Amharic: to Menz and the rest of Shoa, to Gojjam and Damot, to Wegera and Dembiya, and subsequently to Agew Midir and Semien. Second, beyond this central region, often called 'historic Abyssinia,' it influenced a wide area of peripheral kingdoms and peoples by impressing them with the grandeur of the imperial center and the power of its religion. (Levine 2000: 75)

This would indicate the Amhara endeavour of state formation through territorial and cultural expansion. According to Levine, the Amhara attempt at state formation of a Greater Ethiopia was disrupted by the Ottoman invasion under Ahmed Gragn and Oromo expansion, leading to the chaotic period of the Zemene Mesafint. Following the demise of the Zagwe Dynasty and subsequent Amhara-centred state formation, the so-called reincarnation of the Solomonic Dynasty was thus disrupted. A central question here, in terms of continuous statehood, is that if the Zagwe were not Abyssinians by identity, would there have been a state formation that stretched from Axum to the Greater Ethiopia of the Amhara in the fifteenth century? Moreover, what would the characteristic features of Zagwe- and Amhara-based state formation have been? These are important questions to make sense of the historical sociology of state formation, particularly in its historicity of the *longue durée*.

The Muslim and Oromo expansions produced the Zemene Mesafint (Lyons 2019: 16). It represented an era where multiple states existed as independent feudal chieftaincies that were engaged in continuous wars spurred by the accumulation of resources, land and domination. This period is often described as a time of chaos, decentralisation and state disintegration. It also represented a period where, following the end of

the Zagwe Dynasty, the process of metamorphosis of state formation faced considerable hurdles. The Zemene Mesafint could be compared to the European era of feudalism, characterised by decentralisation and feuds between lords and kings, before the ushering in of the absolute state era (Anderson 1979).

The Zemene Mesafint came to an end when Kasa Haylu, who was of humble origins, proclaimed himself Emperor Tewodros II (1855–1868). He aimed to unite the various provinces ruled by princes (kings and lords) through making war. The unification wars required mobilisation of resources and a massive peasant army. With the accumulation of the means of violence, Tewodros embarked on an ambitious process of empire-state formation:

The man who represented the first effective response to both the internal and the external challenge – to the squabbling princes as well as to the ‘Turk’ – was Kasa Haylu, who, on his coronation in 1855 as Emperor Tewodros II, inaugurated the modern history of Ethiopia. Kasa became Tewodros largely by dint of his own personal qualities: his sense of mission, his military skill and valour and his extraordinary intelligence. He was essentially a self-made man. Kasa the *shefta* (bandit) became Tewodros the Emperor. Although his career was initially formed within the politics of the Zamana Masafent, finally he proved to be its antithesis. (Zewde 2001: 27)

Before completing the unification process, however, Tewodros committed suicide after he failed to stop a British expeditionary force that came to rescue British citizens Tewodros had imprisoned (Rubenson 1978: 174). The demise of Tewodros demonstrates the role of diplomacy or external intervention in the process of state formation. The British intervention played a decisive role in an internal power struggle and in positioning prospective claimants to the throne. The subsequent shift in the balance of power led to the emergence of Tigray as the seat of the monarchy.

The unification work was continued by Tewodros’ successor Emperor Youhaness IV, who was partially successful. After the death of Yohannes at the hands of the Sudanese Islamic Mahdists, Emperor Menilik II assumed power. According to Zewde (2001: 60): ‘For Tewodros, unification meant the creation of a centralized unitary state. For Yohannes it signified the establishment of a loosely united Ethiopia, with autonomous regional rulers under an emperor exercising benevolent political suzerainty’.

Menilik is credited with completing the unification of Ethiopia. Menilik not only succeeded in unifying Abyssinia, but also expanded it four-fold by invading and incorporating territories and peoples south of the historical Abyssinian borders (Zewde 2001; Marcus 2002).

The expansion occurred in two stages, before and after Menilik became emperor. While a king of Shewa, before his ascendancy to the throne of king of kings (emperor), Menilik invaded territories to the south, southwest and southeast of Shewa, forcing the rulers of the regions to submit to his suzerainty and incorporating them into his rule. The conquest of territories, peoples and resources was aptly used in the state formation process. The expansion indisputably strengthened Menilik's human and material resources immensely; he was therefore able to easily defeat his rivals to the throne.

Menelik continued the work of expansion and unification (Zewde 2001; Marcus 2002; Levine 2000) at a time when European powers were partitioning Africa. Modern Ethiopia is therefore a creation of the colonial era. Following Menelik's expansion beyond Shewa, in a similar fashion to European states the Abyssinian state embarked on a homogenising and centralising state formation process. Homogenisation and centralisation meant coalescing around the Amharic language and culture and Orthodox Christianity (Markakis 2021). 'Menilik was a Christian nationalist, rebuilding the Solomonic state through introduction of modern firearms, military discipline, and an army that was up to 50,000 strong' (Christensen and Laitin 2019: 192–193). Moreover, with regard to homogenisation, Lata (2012: 93) notes: 'Amharization became the Ethiopian version of modernization. Amharization entailed glorifying and promoting the identity, culture and language of Amharic-speakers while banning the official use of other languages and disparaging the culture of other communities'.

By way of summary, Ethiopia's pre-modern state formation can be delineated in the following stages: the Axumite kingdom (first–seventh centuries) was followed by the Zagwe kingdom (1150–1270); the Amhara kingdoms (1314–1667) (Zewde 2001: 8–10); and the Zemene Mesafint (1769–1855) (Bekele 2015: 160).

THE EMERGENCE OF THE MODERN STATE IN ETHIOPIA

The historical sociology of state formation in Ethiopia, in a modern context, was the product of two interconnected phenomena. The first is that the emergence of the modern state was connected with the period of the scramble for Africa. While European powers set out to partition the continent among themselves, Abyssinia was expand its own empire. The second concerned the emergence of a centralising leader. The centralisation and integration of the state began under Emperor Tewodros II was continued by Emperor Yohannes IV and was completed by Emperor Menilik II.

According to Zewde (2001: 111): ‘The process of territorial expansion and the creation of the modern empire-state had been completed by 1898’. Expansion entailed two vital elements of state formation, notably war-making and taxation. War-making presupposed mobilisation, recruitment and arming the peasantry; the creation of a standing army came much later. Both Tewodros and Menilik diligently worked to mobilise and arm the peasantry for the purpose of making wars to subjugate rivals and conquer territories. This was also necessary to stave off external enemies. Emperor Menilik II, for instance, mobilised a huge army consisting of 100,000 peasants against Italian invasion at the Battle of Adwa (Rubenson 1978: 403). The huge peasant army required supplies, a burden which fell on the shoulders of peasant society. This in turn required planning, organisation and institutional proficiency. To win, a war required better weapons. The leaders, therefore, entered into overt and covert deals with European powers for the acquisition of weapons. Whoever had more and better weapons than their enemy secured victory (Zewde 2001).

Recruitment, modern arms and taxation as a means of successful war-making drove the process of state-making through the emergence of institutions. Taxation in addition to generating state revenue contributed to the construction of state institutions that specialised in tax collection, savings, administration and allocation. These were the prelude to the emergence of the modern state. A significant dimension of war-making and expansion pertain to border definition and delimitation. Modern states are identified by precisely defined and delimited borders. Menilik’s territorial expansion was accompanied by territorial integration, centralisation and delimitation. In doing this, Menilik entered into legal and

binding conventions and agreements with the proximate colonial authorities of the time; Britain, France and Italy were the colonial masters of Sudan, Kenya, British Somaliland, French Somaliland, Italian Somaliland and Eritrea, respectively. Those conventions and agreements produced modern Ethiopia; and, therefore, the rationale for the contention that modern Ethiopia is a creation of the colonial era.

Today, Menilik is widely accepted in Ethiopia as the creator of modern Abyssinia. The process of state centralisation and national unification commenced by Tewodros II and continued by his successor Yohannes IV achieved its goal under Menilik. The infrastructure of the modern historical sociology of state formation laid down by Menilik was to be continued by his successor Haile Selassie (1931–1974), the last emperor. Abyssinia formally changed its name to Ethiopia in 1941 when Haile Selassie was reinstated on the throne following the demise of Italian occupation (Perham 1969: 15).

It is a widely accepted notion that the second half of the nineteenth century constituted the genesis of the inception of the modern Ethiopian state (Bekele 2015). The reconstruction of the state involved three developments: (1) centralisation (the end of the *Zemene Mesafint* and unification); (2) territorial expansion; and (3) evading European colonisation and maintaining the independence of the country.

These developments were contingent on the termination of the chaotic period of the *Zemene Mesafint*:

the *Zemene Mesafint* came to be seen by the populace as a period of disorder, chaos and lawlessness, as a period of when there was no central authority, as an era of unceasing civil wars between the regional lords for supremacy or, as often as not, for sheer raiding and looting. (Bekele 2015: 162)

The termination of the *Zemene Mesafint* and emergence of a centralised state capable of controlling feuding and rival lords and chieftaincies running their respective fiefdoms presupposed the emergence of the modern state. The threshold to modern state formation was buttressed by a number of interrelated sociological, political, military and diplomatic transformations of the nineteenth century. Emperor Menelik II laid the foundations, which succeeding emperors build upon; in particular, Emperor Haile Selassie. This was a significant milestone in the process of state formation.

HAILE SELASSIE: THE MODERNISING MONARCH

Notwithstanding, the mythology, undoubtedly, Ethiopia in its current form is a creation of the colonial era. In the precolonial period, state power rested on a feudal system. In the feudal state system, the emperor as king of kings had absolute power, while kings and nobles of the various territories and provinces constituted vassals. The emperor derived absolute power as the representative of divinity on earth, entitling him to unfettered earthly power. This denied the people any influence in politics. The people were subjects, not citizens invested with rights.

Haile Selassie's rule was characterised by contradictions and paradoxes with regard to state formation. On the one hand, Haile Selassie, who received a Western education and travelled widely in Europe before ascending to the throne, was praised for introducing modern, Western-style state institutions and education, which produced a new elite (Zewde 2001: 220ff, Tareke 2009: 16–17). Moreover, as Tareke (2009: 18) explains, 'state-driven modernization heralded the advent of industrialization, urbanisation, bureaucratization, secular education, and social classes whose aspirations and ambitions clashed with those of the older order'. On the other hand, and as Tareke (*ibid.*: 16) notes, Haile Selassie 'established a centralised dynastic state by eradicating provincial autonomies and cautiously steering a feudal polity into the modern world'. Therefore, the emperor was credited with creating a progressively centralising state and society, where administrative provinces and structures were clearly established. Eventually, however, the tensions between the old and the emerging orders engendered a breakdown of the system.

The characteristic features of modern states are bureaucratisation, institutionalisation and democratisation (Evans 1989; Chabal and Daloz 1999; Bratton and van de Walle 1997; Poggi 1978; Kamrava 2000). Bureaucratisation pertains to—in the Weberian tradition—the emergence of a system of rule guided by an administrative office where the civil service, and routinisation of administration predicated on the principle of neutrality and objectivity, reign supreme. It depicts an administrative system characterised by professionalism and meritocracy in the recruitment of civil servants. Rules and established norms define the recruitment of officials. Institutionalisation, as Kamrava (2000: 2) notes, is 'the effective establishment of state authority over society through specially created political structures and organs'.

In this sense, institution building is state building *par excellence*. Poggi (1978: 1) further elaborates: ‘The modern state is perhaps best seen as a complex set of institutional arrangements for rule operating through the continuous and regulated activities of individuals acting as occupants of offices’. Institutionalisation, broadly conceptualised, pertains to setting up political, social and economic institutions that include an executive, legislature and judiciary; civil society organisations; educational and health institutions; an accountable and transparent banking system; and auditing and transaction regimes.

Democratisation entails the construction of institutions of divided power (Bratton and van de Walle 1997). In its generic meaning, democratisation refers to fostering democratic institutions; freedom of speech and association; the ascendance of leaders to power through electoral and competitive processes that promote the rule of law; accountability and control of power holders, etc. In short, democratisation concerns the enhancement of accountability, transparency, the rule of law, popular participation and citizen empowerment, instead of personalised and individualistic rule, etc. State formation anchored in these values and principles affords state popularity, legitimacy and functionality.

Due to his socialisation in Western education and visits to Europe, Haile Selassie attempted to replicate Western models. The replication, however, was symbolic or half-hearted. It purportedly introduced a division of power, but real power remained in the hands of the emperor. For instance, a new constitution was introduced in 1931 (Zewde 2001: 206) that could have endowed the state formation process with a formal institutional edifice. This was followed by the introduction of a formal division of power into the three branches of state (the executive, legislature and judiciary). In spite of introducing a national assembly (legislature), judiciary and cabinet of ministers headed by a prime minister (executive), the emperor, as absolute monarch, retained absolute power. Critics would say the introduction of these seemingly modern democratic institutions served as a smokescreen for divine monarchical power (Tareke 2009: 17).

From the 1950s, the monarchy embarked on a pervasive modernisation process that led to societal transformation. This produced a blend of feudalism and capitalism, giving way to the connotation of the feudal bourgeois society—the hyphenation is an indication of society in transition. The modernisation work underpinning the state formation process was consolidated by the advent of a variety of infrastructural innovations, which included roads, railways, telecommunications, banking, electricity

and water systems (Zewde 2001). Despite these innovations, however, Ethiopia remained underdeveloped, which induced the rise of a radical student movement, leading to the final demise of the monarchy (Zewde 2001, 2010; Tareke 2009).

The process of modernisation leading to differentiation and specialisation ultimately produces societal strata. Such strata include modern classes and social groups, resting on differentiated political economies. These, in turn, produce differences in political, economic, ideological and philosophical interests and spaces that may find resolution through bitter struggles (cf. Kebede 2008; Zewde 2010). The role and nature of the state as representative of certain interests and groups, as well as the level of its developmental formation, dictate the process, ferocity and outcome of the struggle. State-led development and transformation in transitional societies is of decisive importance because the state is the only organised and embracing agent of national significance. The history of Ethiopia is an epitome of this axiom.

The case of Haile Selassie's modernisation endeavour is a demonstration of a version of what Badie (2000) designates conservative modernisation, since it relies on the support of the traditional elite. Modernisation was particularly visible in the education sector (Kebede 2008; Tareke 2009). This in turn induced structural transformation, whereby a feudal bourgeois state emerged. The version of modernisation the monarch adopted was conspicuously conservative in nature:

Conservative modernization represents, at least in the beginning, a reasoned choice: to better preserve his power, the leader tries to adapt it to the new conditions, that is, to an idea of modernity that he hopes will bring him both additional resources and increased legitimacy. (Badie 2000: 94)

When Haile Selassie ascended to the throne in 1931, he set out to achieve three basic goals: 'to build a modern nation-state out of the tapestry of ethnicities, to safeguard its independence and his own authority with modern national organizations of coercion, and to rule without any intervening forces that is, to become an absolutist monarch' (Tareke 2009: 16). As part of this modernisation state formation endeavour, the emperor introduced a new constitution in 1931, which was amended in 1955 (Zewde 2001: 206). The amendment was widely believed to be connected with the joining of Eritrea to the empire under

a UN-sponsored federal arrangement. Accentuating this, Clapham (2015: 198) observes:

The new Constitution was in some degree prompted by the federation with Eritrea, which had created an embarrassing contrast between the popularly elected Eritrean administration and the government of the rest of the country by an emperor who claimed to rule as the 'elect of God'.

The amendment was intended to lure and accommodate Eritreans who, in their autonomous federal status, were endowed with a democratic constitution and institutions (Habte Selassie 1989; Gebre-Medhin 1989). The emperor had to reconcile some aspects of the Ethiopian constitution with what had been added to the empire.

Arguably, two highly visible areas the monarch modernised were education and military (Lyons 2019; Tareke 2009; Zewde 2001). Education curricula were modelled on the Western education system, particularly American ones (Yigezu 2010: 32). Further, Western teachers were imported into the country to equip students with a Western education (Kebede 2008; Zewde 2010). However, the double edge of modern education was to be seen very soon. A fall in the quality of education, coupled with a lack of employment opportunities for university graduates, induced students to actively seek to change the system in the early 1970s. The students of Addis Ababa University played an active role, as Markakis and Nega note:

Students and teachers were extremely active agitating, pamphleteering, and demonstrating and provoking others to do the same. They infiltrated other organizations, and sought to influence their position injecting political elements into every conflict and sharpening contradictions whenever possible. Gradually they succeeded in focusing diverse grievances on the regime itself, defining it as the country's essential problem, and the formation of a people's government as the only real solution. 'The root of such problem as corrupt officials and similar problems, is the system itself,' averred one leaflet, 'and the solution to them is a fundamental change of the system and the formation of a people's government'. (cited in Kebede 2008: 22)

In an effort to modernise education, students were dispatched to the West. Western education was perceived as superior and a necessary condition for the modernisation of Ethiopia. But it was not only academic

education that was sought; military personnel were also sent to Western military academies, while Western military instructors trained the army inside the country in order to modernise the military institution. Yet, conservative modernisation is permeated with veritable contradictions. The contradictions are visible in ‘the leader’s efforts to simultaneously import Western models and preserve his own hold on traditional authority’ (Badie 2000: 97). The Western-educated students and the military eventually sealed the fate of the monarchy (Keller 2014: 69).

While the Western model implied the introduction of rational-legal, Weberian authority, adherence to the old system implied upholding traditional authority. The other aspect of modern state formation pertains to state centralisation and hierarchisation. The emperor, particularly following his reinstatement on the throne in 1941, embarked upon effective centralisation and restructuring of the country, which included the creation of provinces (*teqlay gizat*), districts (*awraja*), subdistricts (*woreda*) and municipalities (Cloete and Abebe 2011: 17). Ethiopia was compartmentalised into 14 provinces, including Eritrea, following its annexation in 1962. Provincial governors were appointed from the centre, particularly Shewa, the epicentre of the empire (Clapham 2002: 13).

Haile Selassie’s most significant contribution to modern state formation was that during his reign Ethiopia was formally introduced to a state system designed along modern lines, where there existed a division of the legislature, judiciary and executive (Tareke 2009; Zewde 2001). The legislature consisted of two chambers, with lower and upper houses. Members of the lower chamber were to be popularly elected, but: ‘Parliament was a caricature of a truly representative institution. Mostly, it rubber-stamped decisions made by the emperor and his cabinet’ (Tareke 2009: 17). The executive branch consisted of a council of ministers composed of a prime minister and ministers. Ideally, this would form a cabinet of ministers headed by the prime minister. The reality, however, was completely different. The prime minister and ministers were appointed by the emperor. According to Tareke (ibid.: 18): ‘The king of kings alone could appoint, promote, transfer, suspend, or dismiss ministers, judges, generals, governors, directors, mayors and commissioners’.

Notwithstanding these divisions and distinctions in state structure, however, power was highly centralised and personalised. Indeed, there was a consolidation of absolutism, as Zewde (2001: 201) notes:

The period after 1941 witnessed the apogee of absolutism in Ethiopia. The tentative beginnings in the direction of the pre-1935 years matured into untrammelled autocracy. The power of the state reached a limit unprecedented in Ethiopian history. This was clearly manifested in such spheres as provincial administration, military organization and fiscal control. A ruling class based on landed property, but with interests in trade and industry as well, exercised this power. The architect and physical embodiment of the absolutist order was Emperor Hayla-Sellase.

The feudal bourgeois state displayed distinct features of contradiction and tension, ultimately leading to rupture in 1974. Haile Selassie, on the one hand, endeavoured to eliminate hereditary nobility, thereby destroying feudalism; on the other, he concentrated absolute power in himself. Ostensibly, the modernisation process produced new social classes antagonistic to the landed nobility: ‘By associating modernization with Westernization, modern education unleashed a fundamental conflict between the traditional elite and the new educated elite whose implication displaced the entitlement to power from the former to the latter’ (Kebede 2008: 91).

The inability of the system to reconcile the two social classes, based on the emperor’s conscious technological orientation of modernisation and unwillingness to reform the political structure, fostered an inherently unstable and moribund system. The political structure was in dire need of reform in order to survive. The inability of the emperor to deliver the necessary reform, where gradually the traditional could give way to modern, rendered the state formation process extremely precarious. The emperor, despite efforts to modernise Ethiopia, failed to develop independent and functional state institutions such as a judiciary, legislature and executive; and national, regional and local institutions vital for modern state formation. Hence, the task of modern state formation was once again transferred to another national agency, the military. A number of factors played a decisive role in the demise of the *ancien regime*, including economic difficulties, the drought of 1973–1974 and war in Eritrea (Yordanov 2016: 122–123). The feudal bourgeois state formation finally collapsed, leading to a military-revolutionary socialist state formation.

MILITARY-REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST STATE FORMATION

The failure of the monarchy to transform itself into a constitutional monarchy and allow the modern state formation process to advance spawned a revolution. In 1974, the country was rocked by a popular uprising, which was precipitated primarily by economic difficulties and war in Eritrea. The uprising drove sections of society—students, workers, taxi drivers, white-collar workers, etc.—onto the streets of the capital Addis Ababa, demanding fundamental socioeconomic improvements. Gradually, the socioeconomic demands developed into calls for political changes. The civilian uprising was joined by different units of the army. The grievances the military had were no different from those of the civilians, notably economic ones. In addition, relations between the soldiers and the higher echelons of the military were characterised by master-servant roles (Zewde 2001: 230). Following months of demonstrations and strikes, the military took the final, decisive step and deposed the monarchy.

The radicalisation of university students at Addis Ababa University, influenced by Marxist-Leninist ideology, is attributed to the need to radically overhaul Ethiopian society (Kebede 2008). In the view of the students and leftist organisations, the complex challenges and abysmal poverty Ethiopia was facing could only be solved through social revolution that completely restructured society. A series of strikes held by workers, students, low-ranking clergymen, taxi drivers, public officials and tens of thousands of Muslims (Ficquet 2015) were an expression of the widespread popular resentment of the feudal bourgeois system. This spontaneous popular uprising was supported by leftist political parties such as the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party and the All-Ethiopia Socialist Movement (Mela Ethiopia Socialist Neqenaye–MEISON) (Zewde 2001, 2010; Tareke 2009; Clapham 2017). The political parties were ideologically divided between Chinese and Soviet models, which not only hindered them in leading the revolution, but also meant a bitter ideological struggle took place between them. This, in turn, was effectively exploited by the military. The failure of the political parties to play a vanguard role in the popular uprising paved the way for the military to hijack the popular revolution and reconfigure the state (cf. Zewde 2010).

The creeping ascendancy of the military initially won popular support. Deposing the demi-god emperor was unthinkable—only the military

could do that. In addition, the military's adoption of leftist slogans such as 'Land to the tiller' (*Meriet larashu*) attracted many sympathisers (Gedamu 2022). The ascendancy of the military-Marxist revolutionary state formation represented further modernisation and reconfiguration of the state formation project. The centralisation and hierarchisation of state formation was driven to its extreme. The most important public and administrative state institutions the Dergue military regime introduced were the *kebele*, the lowest administrative unit, and the *Shengo*, the national assembly. In a desperate attempt to contain the various rebellions taking place in the country, the Dergue created autonomous regions—Asseb, Eritrea, Ogaden, Dire Dawa and Tigray—but without any tangible result (Agegnehu and Dibu 2015: 24, Ayenew 2002: 134).

The military organised itself into the Provisional Military Administrative Council, which ran the country from 1974 to 1984, when it was succeeded by the Workers Party of Ethiopia (WPE), which ruled from 1984 to 1991; they were popularly known as the Dergue, 'committee' in Amharic. In continuing the reconfiguration of the state, the *Shengo* in 1987 proclaimed the transformation of the Council into the People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (Zewde 2001: 255–256).

The Dergue's most significant contribution to Ethiopia's modernisation process was the reform of land property rights, what Acemoglu and Robinson (2013) call 'creative destruction'. The Dergue destroyed the archaic land property rights system, which paved way for subsequent endeavours directed towards industrialisation under EPRDF rule. Land redistribution, expropriating land from rich landlords and distributing it among landless peasants, destroyed the central *raison d'être* of the feudal system. It heralded the emancipation of serfs and end of landlords, two core features of feudalism. This development engendered a reconfiguration of the state into a feudal bourgeoisie. The objective of the social revolution, particularly with reference to societal transformation, also included harnessing ethnic equality, harmony and self-rule. In this regard Kefale (2013: 25) notes: 'The NDRP [National Democratic Revolutionary Programme] also declared the equality of the country's ethnic groups and promised self-determination through regional autonomy. However, these pledges were not translated into practice'. The NDRP was the Dergue's blueprint for how to transform Ethiopian society into a modern one and lay a solid foundation for modern state formation. The central agency tasked to implement the transformative work was the WPE, formed in September 1984 (Zewde 2001: 255).

In a speech during the launch of the WPE, the leader of the junta, Mengistu Haile Mariam declared:

The National Democratic Revolutionary Programme explicitly provides for the recognition of the rights of Ethiopian nationalities and the respect for and observance of their history, language and culture, in the spirit of socialism and the pursuit of new life in complete equality, co-operation, brotherhood and understanding. In this regard, the resolution adopted by the Second Commission for Organising the Party of the Working People of Ethiopia (COPWE) Congress in order to ensure a solid basis for the democratic rights of the working people in this country and the establishment of the Institute for Nationalities is of great importance. (quoted in Keller 2014: 80)

As is often the case, however, as Kefale notes above, the real test of the matter is in implementation.

REBELLION, ETHNIC NATIONALISM AND ETHNIC FEDERALIST STATE FORMATION

The very factors that cause the demise of the monarchy, one of which was its flawed state formation project, also eventually led to the revolutionary socialist state. The downfall of the revolutionary Marxist state heralded the inception of ethnic nationalist state formation. The revolutionary Marxist state formation was overthrown by a coalition of ethnic nationalist movements in 1991. The EPRDF consisted of four parties: three ethnic nationalist (the Oromo People's Democratic Organisation, the Amhara National Democratic Movement and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF)) and one regional (the Southern Ethiopian People's Democratic Front). It embarked on reconfiguring the Ethiopian state into ethnic federal structures (Lyons 2019; Kefale 2013; Markakis 2011; Markakis et al. 2021). Based on the conception of ethnic federalist state formation, the EPRDF divided the state into nine regional states and two autonomous city states (Kefale 2009).

The ethnic federalist state formation was evidently intended to remedy the perennial crisis of state formation in Ethiopia. Reconfiguring state formation as ethnic federalism sought to accommodate ethnic groups that had suffered alienation, marginalisation and domination under the dominant Amhara-Orthodox politico-cultural establishment (Markakis 2011).

Federalism is analysed by stemming from two central principles of governance: self-rule and shared-rule. While the former refers to autonomy of ethnic identity in exercising political power itself, the latter refers to the exercise of power in which various ethnic Identities have a common share (Osaghae 2020). The general literature is, however, inconclusive when it comes to whether ethnic federalism brings respect for minority rights and equality, or exacerbates ethnic conflicts (Kefale 2013).

The philosophy undergirding ethnic federalism was equitable distribution of political, economic, cultural and linguistic resources among the various ethnolinguistic groups. As the primary repository of those national resources, the state has always shown a proclivity to monopolise them, thereby permitting the group that captures the state to also dominate those resources. Ethnic federalism as a distributive mechanism of resources was therefore construed as an instrument of empowerment of alienated and marginalised groups. In its ideational social contract form, therefore, it received widespread appreciation and reception among scholars and politicians; in its implementation and practice, however, it proved a disappointment even a disaster.

The appreciation and praise for this bold experiment quickly began to evaporate; many had been sceptical from the very outset. It is nevertheless clear that the experiment embodied inherently contradictory characteristics. The failure to resolve them eventually led to a serious rupture. One of the sources of contradictions pertains to the nature of state formation, which by its nature, particularly in multiethnic societies, is highly centralised, top-down and hierarchically structured. A top-down and state-centred state formation process is in many ways the antithesis of ethnic federal state formation, which is based on the premise of decentralisation. It omits a central tenet of coexistence, notably the social contract where component ethnicities negotiate, bargain for, compromise on and consent to their coexistence. The perils of ethnic federalist state formation are particularly great if it is not properly implemented.

The problem with Ethiopian ethnic federalist state formation is the discrepancy between what is described on paper and what is actually implemented or exists on the ground. According to Barata (2019: 12):

the EPRDF privileged ethnicity over class as the basis of inequality and exploitation in Ethiopia. Thus, the EPRDF boldly declared a total break from the previous state regimes that had privileged one subculture (that of Amharic-speaking Orthodox Christians) as the national culture. Since

seizing control of the state in 1991, the EPRDF had implemented its vision by setting up an ethnically organized system of federalism and subsequent state decentralization along ethnolinguistic lines.

The ethnic nationalist coalition that succeeded the military-Marxist state was bent on reconfiguring the Ethiopian state along ethnic federalist lines. It created nine regions (*kilils*) states and two autonomous cities states, which were supposed to represent the dominant ethnic group of each region. Ethnolinguistic regionalisation was intended, at least theoretically, to create homogenous, self-ruling and ethnolinguistic regions. In reality, however, the regions comprised several ethnolinguistic entities. Indeed, one of the regions, the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region, with 56 ethnolinguistic groups, became the most heterogeneous region (*ibid.*; Kefale 2013). This indicates the fallacy of ethnic federalist state formation based on component ethnolinguistic constituencies and thus the idea that it would be a panacea to the perennial problem of state formation in Ethiopia as prescribed by the EPRDF.

Multiethnic State Formation Versus Ethnic Nationalist State Formation

Conceptually and theoretically, multiethnic state formation and ethnic nationalist state formation rest on two forms of identity formation. Within a common territory (country), they can either be antagonistic or ordered in hierarchical layers. While multiethnic state formation is based on an overarching supraethnic national identity, ethnic nationalist state formation is based on a hegemonic monoethnic subnational identity. The theoretical and conceptual foundation of multiethnic national identity formation is civic (*cf.* Bereketab 2011). At the same time, national identity in a multiethnic society is by definition dual layer. The overarching national layer constitutes the civic and political, while the subnational layer constitutes the ethnic and cultural. The coexistence of the two layers defines multiethnic nations. Harmonising and balancing the two layers is of utmost importance for the functioning of society. Disturbance of the hierarchically arranged duality of identity formation leads to dysfunctionality and deformation of the process of state formation, as occurred in relation to the outbreak of war in Tigray in 2020. In turn, this may

lead to unceasing conflict and insecurity because it disaffects ethnolinguistic relations, with the unnecessary outcome of generating centrifugal tendencies.

A nation state should be able to reflect and represent the two layers of identity. In other words, it should be able to represent subnational identity groups or ethnolinguistic groups, while at the same time going beyond subnational (ethnic) identities to construct a national political identity. Only a state that conflates both layers adequately and reasonably will be able to elicit representation, popular support that earns it legitimacy. Many multiethnic societies suffer from chronic schisms, conflicts and wars because the state fails to represent and satisfy all citizens. The nature and structure of the state determines conditions of peace, stability, security and harmony (cf. Keller 2014; Clapham 1985; Smith 1983).

The state reconfiguration the EPRDF introduced in the early 1990s entailed the bifurcation of institutions and structures. This occurred along a civic and ethnic binary as the foundation of an identity, albeit inclined towards one—the ethnic—more than the other. According to Abbink (2011: 597): ‘It was accompanied by a tortuous and to many people painful rhetoric of ethnicization that declared Ethiopians first and foremost a member of “their ethnic group” and only second as Ethiopian citizens’. The ethnic federalist state dispensation was anchored in ethnolinguistic regional identity formation (Kefale 2009; Abbink 2011). This inclination arguably weakened civic national identity. The binary state dispensation of ethnic/regional and civic/national was arranged in parallel, manifested itself in the replication of institutions and structures at both levels. The executive, legislature and judiciary were replicated at national as well as regional levels (Kefale 2013). The regional states were also constitutionally endowed with the means of coercion: the army, militias and police. This structural dispensation tended to make ethno-regional state formation equal to if not stronger than supraethnic nation state formation. Formally affording the means of coercion to ethnolinguistic regional states undermined the supremacy of supraethnic state formation.

Nevertheless, despite an apparently decentralised state structure, the system was in fact highly centralised and regulated top-down (Abbink 2011). Referring to this fact, Kefale (2013: 43) writes: ‘Hence, Ethiopia established a centralized federation, where policy decisions come from the centre and the sub-units are responsible for implementation’. The contradiction between theory (constitution, structure and ideology) and

praxis (practical performance) made the system susceptible to minority domination. Most importantly, the system failed to resolve the perennial challenge Ethiopia faces: reconciliation between ethnolinguistic and civic national identity and state formation.

POST-EPRDF AND POST-REVOLUTIONARY DEMOCRACY STATE FORMATION

The year 2018 was momentous in the history of the persistent reconfigurations of the Ethiopian state in many dimensions. It heralded not only the end of the EPRDF and its revolutionary democracy, but also represented a power shift of historic magnitude. This occurred in two dimensions, geographical and ethnic. An overlap or conflation of geography and ethnicity compounded the transfer of power. In terms of geography, it moved from north to south. In terms of ethnicity, for the first time in Ethiopian history, a transference from Abyssinians to Oromos occurred. Southern politicians conceived this transfer as an opportunity for Ethiopia to embark on democratic state formation. The conception seems to have stemmed from a common understanding that stipulated the existence of differences of certain characteristics between the northern and southern peoples of Ethiopia. The cultures and societal structures and institutions of the southern peoples, which are widely believed to be inherently egalitarian, democratic and representative, were seen as an opportune foundation for democratic state formation. The Abyssinian social structure, with its autocratic, rigid hierarchical and pyramidal power relations, has been perceived as an obstacle to democratic state formation (Markakis 2011; Abbink 2011; Markakis et al. 2021).

The Tigray People's Liberation Front/Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (TPLF/EPRDF) in its attempt at reconfiguration of the state into an ethno-regional identity formation introduced ethnic federalism as the state dispensation (Lyons 2019; Tareke 2009; Keller 2014). The ethnic federalist state formation was initially praised as a daring experiment (Turton 2006; Abbink 2011). But it soon proved to be a sham (Kefale 2013; Abbink 2011). Its failure had less to do with the theoretical or philosophical foundation of the state structure and experiment in the exercise of power than with its implementation. Properly and rigorously implemented, it might have provided a genuine solution to the perennial predicament of the question of nationalities. Many critics

have drawn the conclusion that ethnic federalism was a mischief instrumentalised by the TPLF as a Machiavellian scheme to divide and rule (Berhanu 2018).

The politics and philosophy underpinning this perception of federalism is that it empowers minorities (Osaghae 2020). This is of utmost significance in pluralist, multiethnic societies such as Ethiopia; it protects minorities from being dominated by larger groups. The mechanism of protection includes respect for cultural and linguistic specificity as the markers and foundation of identity. It is often argued that to give minority groups institutional and jurisdictional protection, federalism need to be augmented through hierarchal mechanisms and dimensions of shared-rule and self-rule, rather than through parallel arrangements (van der Beken 2019). This arrangement confers autonomy on ethnolinguistic groups within an overarching national political power arrangement. This, in turn, generates harmony between ethnic regions and the supraethnic civic nation. The TPLF/EPRDF, however, utilised federalism as a scheme for control and domination. The TPLF attempted to reconfigure the Ethiopian state in its own image. Many interpret ethnic federalism in Ethiopia as a device intended to ensure minority domination rather than protection of minorities.

Hailing from the Abyssinian autocratic social structure, the TPLF was perceived as lacking the cultural pedigree to introduce a genuine democratic state formation. It was in this light that the rise of the Oromos was welcomed. The failure of implementation spawned strong resentment among the very ethnic groups that were supposed to benefit from the new dispensation, mainly the Oromos. The election of 2005, where the opposition claimed to have won, and subsequent suppression by the EPRDF, came as a watershed moment (Berhanu 2018: 205; Abbink 2011: 598). The election was the last nail in the coffin for any hope of political change through an electoral process: the EPRDF won all the seats in the national parliament. Beginning in November 2015 in the Oromo region and June 2016 in the Amhara region, a massive youth uprising took place, pushing the country to the brink of collapse. Ethiopia in 2017 was by any measure on the threshold of disintegration. This led to a fundamental shake-up within the ruling coalition. The Oromo People's Democratic Organisation held the TPLF responsible for the suffering of the Oromo youth. Consequently, the TPLF was thrown out of the corridors of power in the Menelik Palace: Oromos replaced the Tigrayans. The new dispensation has once again put Ethiopia at a crossroads in its state formation project.

Ethnic Federalist State Formation Versus Civic State Formation

The post-EPRDF transition and transformation confronted the two-pronged challenge of state formation. Two trends emerged. One trend wanted to maintain the ethnic federalist arrangement the EPRDF had introduced, while the other endeavoured to reconfigure Ethiopian polity in favour of civic citizenry and abolish ethnic identity as the foundation of state formation. The immediate post-EPRDF Ethiopia was thus immersed in a political struggle between two competing visions of state formation. These contending visions played out the perennially unresolved question of identity and state formation in Ethiopia.

Since at least the 1960s, the question of identity and concomitant nature and structure of the state has been contentious. The national question, which later became ethnic nationalism, engaged the student movement, beginning in the mid-1960s. Leftist political organisations joined the debate and demanded that the question of nationalities be addressed. It was one of the pivotal issues that contributed to the fall of the monarchy (Kebede 2008), which hardly contributed to resolving the question of nationalities and the problem of state formation. The failure of the military junta that replaced the monarchy led to the formation of ethnic nationalist rebel groups. The question of nationalities—now ethnicities—contributed to the downfall of the military junta (Gedamu 2022).

Over the past 30 years, the policy and ideology of ethnic nationalism has defined state formation in Ethiopia. The crisis within the EPRDF, and particularly the ultimate demise of the TPLF, seems to have pushed ethnic nationalism towards its final end. Contending visions and forces have characterised Ethiopia's post-TPLF-dominated polity. On the one hand, there are those who would like to maintain ethnic federalism as the governing ideology of state formation. On the other, there are forces that believe ethnic federalism is destroying the country and should be dismantled. The competing visions of ethnic federalist devolution and unitary centralism are pulling Ethiopia apart. The anti-ethnic federalist forces advocate a civic identity based state formation. Resolution of this tension depends on power relations between these forces and will determine future of the country. Ethiopia's existence, however, requires striking a balance between opposing visions and forces. The harmony and coexistence of its ethnic and civic identity formation is a prerequisite of the multiethnic Ethiopia.

CONCLUSION

The proto-state model represents state formation in Ethiopia. The historiography of Ethiopian state formation is often described as unique when it is juxtaposed with the rest of the continent. This uniqueness is explained by its longevity and because it evaded European colonisation. In the context of the scramble for Africa and the concomitant humiliation and degradation, Africans were subjected to under European rule, Ethiopia is perceived as the pride of Africa. The Ethiopian state is ranked among the oldest in the world, claiming at least three millennia of existence and statehood. This puts it on a par with the absolutist feudal states of Europe. This parity with its counterparts in Europe is also believed to have enabled it to evade European colonisation. As with any mythology surrounding state formation, however, the Ethiopian mythology has its own contradictions and ambiguities. Some of the questions over Ethiopian state formation revolve around the claim of its consistent and uninterrupted existence over the course of three thousand years. Were the original Ethiopians the same as today's Ethiopians and are the perimeters of the original and contemporary territories the same? The pre-modern history of state formation unequivocally demonstrates disparate and disconnected epochs and peoples.

Different centres of power based on different peoples have come and gone in those historical trajectories in the region known today as Ethiopia. Even the names were different. The name 'Ethiopia' began to be used officially in 1941 under the newly reinstated Emperor Haile Selassie. The first centre of power was the Axumite kingdom, based in the north and around the habitat of today's Tigrinya-speaking people. The Axumite kingdom was not immediately and directly replaced by another kingdom; rather, its demise led to wars of invasion and the absence of a hegemonic power centre. Several centuries later another kingdom, Zagwe, rose to prominence south of the Axumite kingdom, centred on the Agow people. The demise of the Zagwe kingdom paved the road for Amhara kingdoms, centred on the Amhara people. The Amhara endeavour of state formation with the ambition of creating a Greater Ethiopia was interrupted, leading to the Zemene Mesafint, which was characterised by rivalries between different regions and kings and nobilities. This ushered in the modern period of state formation initiated by Emperor Tewodros II and completed by Emperor Menelik II. Menelik is widely acknowledged as the creator of the contemporary Ethiopian state formation, particularly in

unifying and expanding its territory. The work of Menelik was continued by the last emperor, Haile Selassie.

The modern state formation Menelik crafted is the product of colonisation and expansion, which to certain degree could explain the perennial crisis of state formation in Ethiopia. The crisis is driven by centrifugal forces that challenge the legitimacy and authenticity of the state formation Menelik created. The mythology is not shared by all the people that reside in today's Ethiopia. The prevalence of centrifugal forces challenging the authority and hegemony of the central state in the historical sociology of state formation is taken as evidence of the state's inability to exercise social control. Absence of social control in turn indicates the incompleteness of state formation. Despite the mythology of continuous statehood stretching over several millennia, state formation in Ethiopia is still a work in progress.

Just as modern Greece is not the same as prehistoric Greece, prehistoric Ethiopia might not be the same as contemporary Ethiopia. Modern Ethiopia is a construct of the colonial era. In the same manner as European powers took part in the scramble for Africa, Abyssinia actively participated in the scramble and expanded its territory four-fold. This participation might have helped Ethiopia to avoid European colonisation, but at the same time it sowed the seeds of future conflicts, instability and state dysfunctionality.

Nonetheless, regardless of the controversies and ambiguities revolving around its state formation, Ethiopia gained the reputation of not having been colonised, as well as being the pride of blacks throughout the world. The fact is, however, state formation in Ethiopia continues to be as precarious as in those colonially created states on the continent. As much as Ethiopians admire Menelik's expansion of the Ethiopian state, they also blame this expansion for the perennial predicament Ethiopia faces in its endeavour to construct a viable state formation. The very multiethnic body politics Menelik's invasions and expansions constructed is attributed to the precarious nature of Ethiopia's state formation. Relations between the various nations and nationalities and their affiliation to the state determined the fate of the monarchy and the military regime that succeeded it, as well as that of the EPRDF.

The three regimes that ruled Ethiopia in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries were as troubled by the project of state formation as postcolonial states in Africa. The three regimes sought to reconfigure the state's structure according to their particular ideological orientation. The last

two regimes recognised the multiethnic composition of Ethiopian society and acknowledged the problem posed by the question of nationalities and ethnicities. They also accepted, as a constitutional and institutional mechanism, the right to self-determination of ethnolinguistic groups as a mechanism of dealing with state formation. While the Dergue's provision for self-determination was limited to regional autonomy, the EPRDF's conception of self-determination went as far as allowing ethnolinguistic groups to secede or declare their own sovereign statehood.

State formation remains a major challenge for Ethiopia. Therefore, in 2022 Ethiopia finds itself at a crossroads. Two conceptions and visions are at the centre of the crossroads. On the one hand, there are those forces that would like to maintain and consolidate the conceptions and visions of ethnic federalist state formation; on the other, there are those that would like to recast state formation on a civic identity basis. These binary conceptions, visions and forces are tearing apart the sociopolitical fabric. The paradox is that a country that counts 3,000 years of continuous statehood is still grappling with the question of state formation.

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Colonial State Formation

INTRODUCTION

The second model of state formation discussed in this book is colonial one. The majority of states in the HOA trace their origin to colonialism. The overall consequence of colonialism, from a historical and evolutionary perspective of state formation, could be understood in its disruption and distortion of the natural process and transformation of those societies. In addition, colonialism grafted alien structures, institutions and norms in the societies. It created cleavages between the emergent urban centres and the overwhelming rural population, between the urban centred capitalist oriented political economy and rural agrarian political economy, between the urban elite that was to conquer power in the postcolonial era and the disenfranchised majority. These cleavages defined and determined the nature and structure of the postcolonial state. Moreover, they undergird the impediment of state-society unity and harmony, requirements for peace, stability and development. The postcolonial state that was born carrying contradictory and conflicting characteristics constituted the source of the pathologies bedevilling societies in the HOA today. Colonialism is gone but its effects are still wreaking havoc in the region. The history of the colonial formation of the state and its consequences needs to be properly studied and learned in order to adequately understand the pathologies affecting the HOA. This chapter is an effort towards that objective.

The scramble for Africa began in the 1860s and was completed in the 1900s. Drawing their boundaries on maps, Europeans created colonies, protectorates and free-trade zones. The process is cogently expounded by Mentan (2010: 169):

The last wave of colonialism was codified with the Conference of Berlin in 1884–1885, which set up ‘effective occupation’ of the areas under European control. Colonial administrative boundaries were established without regard for the divisions in African society or geography that existed before colonial occupation. Through these acts Europeans decided how they could best break down traditional social and economic networks for more efficient social control and resource extraction.

To use Weber’s expression, the colonial powers laid the foundations for the emergence of ‘a community of sentiment’ (Weber 1948). According to Weber, nations are no more than communities of sentiment; moreover, communities of sentiment fostered within the perimeters of delimited and delineated territoriality, which Rokkan (1975) depicted as a phenomenon where those who happen to be within the borders of the state are included as members, while those outside of the borders are excluded. Colonialism is also associated with pacifying colonial societies, perceived to be a requirement for the emergence of modern states. Traditional elites were co-opted into the colonial power structure. Tribal chiefs were converted into salaried colonial civil servants. In communities lacking a chieftaincy, the colonial authorities produced one for them, so that they could be incorporated into the power structure and serve as instruments to control the colonial peoples (Mamdani 1996; Ekeh 1975). The most conspicuous result of colonial state formation is perhaps territoriality and centralisation. This metamorphosed into the politico-legal and socio-economic integration of disparate ethnolinguistic groups, fostering a broadly defined common identity formation, which forms the foundation of the postcolonial territorial states.

In its modern version, territoriality and centralisation as the foundation of the emerging colonial state formation rested on the foundation of European state formation. The territorial delineation carried out by colonial powers was a flagrant failure to take into consideration the diverse ethnic, religious, cultural, linguistic and topographic modes of life of those to be compartmentalised within the territorial state formation. This

discordance between the local social fabric and imposed and manufactured territoriality as the foundation of state formation stand at the centre of conflicts, division and disintegration of the colonial as well as the post-colonial state. Another dimension of this discordance is the divergence between the power holders (state agents, Europeans) and receivers of power (subjects, Africans). It is also important to remember that the contributions of the various colonial powers to the process and project of state formation were not identical. Britain's contribution was different from that of France, Portugal or Italy; and that of France was different from that of Italy or Portugal. Mazrui (1983) contends that while British colonialism contributed to state formation, the French contribution was to nation formation. This variability in colonial contribution to African societies had calamitous consequences for postcolonial state formation, too.

The transition from precolonial to colonial was not only abrupt, but also cruel and violent. In its abruptness, colonised societies were not given the opportunity to gradually transition from the system they knew to a new system they did not know. The cruelty and violence involved genocide, treachery, distraction and enslavement (Acemoglu and Robinson 2013), targeting social structures and traditional custodial authority. The destruction of social structures and traditional authority was a necessity for the success of the new system. The level and practice of violence intended to dislocate existing power structures of course varied from colonial power to colonial power. British indirect rule differed from French assimilation, and the middle range (mixed form) of Portuguese and Italian rule. Converting a whole country, Zaire, into the personal property of Belgium's King Leopold I was an extreme manifestation of the cruelty of colonialism.

This chapter examines the mechanisms and modalities through which colonial authorities were able to manufacture colonial states in Africa. At the foundation of these mechanisms was territorialisation. The chapter consists of five sections: the following section examines state formation under the aegis of colonialism; Section 3 examines the consequences of colonialism; and Section 4 discusses decolonisation and the postcolonial state. Section 5 provides concluding remarks.

STATE FORMATION UNDER THE AEGIS OF COLONIALISM

The colonial contribution to state formation in Africa involved a multitude of characteristics. One of these was the grafting of Western institutions, structures and praxes onto the African sociopolitical body (Ekeh 1983: 9; Mamdani 1996: xx). This resulted in the dislocation and relegation of domestic institutions, structures, authorities and mechanisms into the sphere of informality and the private realm. It is widely believed to have engendered a mismatch between state and society in postcolonial Africa. The mismatch is an attribute of the reality that the 'state that emerged in postcolonial Africa is founded on ideational structures that are alien to the African environment' (Araoye 2014: 45). Certainly, that misfit underlies the crisis of state in the postcolonial era. This section examines the nature and structure of the state constructed under the aegis of colonialism.

To examine colonial state formation I will use four analytical dimensions as the foundations of colonial state formation in Africa to help us understand the mechanisms and processes of how colonial states were set in motion: (1) territorial integration; (2) politico-legal integration; (3) socioeconomic integration; and (4) common history (Bereketeab 2007). These four dimensions are thought to be enhanced by two more dimensions; notably, common political culture; and the will to live together, which cements the incremental cohesion of society. Before analysing these analytical dimensions, it is of great importance to emphasise that they are the cornerstone of modern European state formation. The colonial authorities sent to Africa to reconfigure their possessions simply pursued the model of state formation back at home. They were transported by the colonial ship (Tilly 1975; Davidson 1992; Englebert and Dunn 2013: 48).

Highlighting the level of exportation and imposition Smith (1983a: 50) states:

European state-makers were highly successful in imposing the territorial aspect of the Western state on the African demographic and political map, and hence they were able to draw sharp boundaries, not only in political and economic reality, but also in the psychic identity and cultural vision of the new elites.

Christensen and Laitin (2019: 194) argue that:

European powers did not want to pay the costs of fighting wars and building states in Africa. Colonial powers deployed few officials in their African colonies, and those who were assigned to African posts had only blunt tools to build fiscal capacity.

What this means is that Europeans were merely interested in extracting benefits from their possessions as cheaply as possible. This avoided heavy investment in materials and humans in the colonies, while at the same time reaping the benefits, which implied using cheap local resources without taking responsibility for the wellbeing of the population. Local human resources in the lower administrative services played a decisive role in the smooth operation of the colonial order. Existing chiefs were co-opted as intermediaries—what Mamdani (1996) designated decentralised despotism—in order to be able to administer the colonies.

Colonial administration made sure any potential or real resistance by colonised peoples was first removed and destroyed. The destruction involved eliminating sources of power: social, political, juridical, cultural and economic authorities and structures were systematically targeted. At the centre of economic power was land. Massive areas of fertile land were expropriated from communities and traditional authorities, and given to settlers or converted into corporate agro-industrial projects to produce goods for export to Europe, which did not benefit local needs. The process represented a double loss for local populations: they lost their primary source of subsistence (the land) and it did not create job opportunities. The double loss amounted to a violation of their existence either through physical elimination or cultural annihilation. With reference to the instrumentalisation of violence in order to engender people's total submission, Bauman (2000: 119) notes:

'Ordinary' genocide is rarely, if at all, aimed at the total annihilation of the group; the purpose of the violence (if the violence is purposeful and planned) is to destroy the marked category (a nation, a tribe, a religious sect) as a viable community capable of self-perpetuation and defence of its own self-identity. If this is the case, the objective of the genocide is met once (1) the volume of violence has been large enough to undermine the will and resilience of the sufferers, and to terrorize them into surrender to the superior power and into the acceptance of the order it imposed; and (2) the marked group has been deprived of resources necessary for the continuation of the struggle.

Destruction is then followed by construction. In the context of destruction, the prime focus was on three dimensions: (1) local authorities; (2) economic structures; and (3) jurisdictional customary laws. These are some of the foundations of the identity of a society, which constitute the building blocks of state formation. Once their destruction has been carried out, societies lack the ability to resist, even losing the cohesive, integrated existence that defines their common identity. If we take destruction of local authorities in the colonies as an example, it entailed the destruction of power structure, authority, leadership, centralisation and societal cohesion. Removing these variables led to the virtual destruction of societies, denying them the ability to resist and challenge external invasion and suppression. In the context of the destruction of economic structures, the basis of local authority as well as means of self-sufficiency and self-reliance were removed. This principally concerned the expropriation of land, which forced the conversion of indigenous elites into salaried colonial servants. Many peasants were also forced to seek uncertain wage labour in the emerging industries and agro-industries, thereby producing dependent communities. This removed the politico-economic foundation of communities as viable societies. Jurisdictional customary laws as the legal foundations of societies were relegated to informality (Englebert 2005; Kaplan 2009; Sklar 2005). The destruction of the three dimensions meant complete annihilation of indigenous state formation.

In terms of the destruction of the politico-economic foundation of African indigenous state formation, Bayart (2009: xlii) observes:

European occupation radically transformed the resources, the modes and the goals in all social struggles, notably by introducing money into every area of social life, through the institution of private property rights, and in making firearms a central and indispensable element of military technology and of various systems of coercion.

It could be argued that the ‘radical transformation’ had profound implications for the African social fabric in two dimensions: first, through the introduction of the institution of private property into sociocentric African social structures, which disrupted societal balance, second, the introduction of firearms as the central element of military technology inserted coercion as a system of conflict resolution, in contrast to the generic African methodology of conflict resolution based on restitution,

dialogue and consensus. This generated, as Durkheim (1984) put it, societal anomy, disharmony and disequilibrium.

To return to the analytical dimensions mentioned earlier, the reconstruction that followed the deconstruction geared to the Western model of state formation targeted at least three dimensions: (1) territorial integration, (2) politico-legal integration and (3) socioeconomic integration. Territoriality was the very foundation and stepping stone of state formation in Europe (cf. Tilly 1975; Seton-Watson 1977; Rokkan and Urwin 1982). Generally, territorial integration refers to a process of compartmentalisation that generates a clearly demarcated territoriality. States earn legitimacy when they can unequivocally ascertain territorial jurisprudence and are able to exercise unrivalled monopolistic and legitimate coercion within it (Weber 1948). The state formed in this way was regulated by the 1648 Peace of Westphalia (Araoye 2014).

With respect to territorial integration and centralisation in colonial Africa, Smith (1983a, b: xiii) explains that the primary objective was homogenisation of ethnically heterogeneous societies. It was this state formation model that was transplanted to contemporary state formation in Africa. There were a number of dimensions and mechanisms that were carried out by colonial authorities in their efforts of producing colonial territories. The first of these was the delineation and demarcation of the territoriality of their colonial possessions. Territorialisation was carried out without any consideration for ethnic, cultural, topographic, religious or political diversities. The peoples who were compartmentalised within the emerging territoriality were, therefore, a hodgepodge (Lewis 1983; Davidson 1992; Smith 1983a; First 1983). According to Lewis (1983: 73):

It is a remarkable irony that the European powers who partitioned Africa in the late nineteenth century when the idea of the nation-state was paramount, should have created in Africa a whole series of Habsburg-style states, comprising a medley of peoples and ethnic groups lumped together within frontiers which paid no respect to traditional cultural contours.

Many scholars of state formation stress the artificiality of the entities created by European colonial powers (Bayart 2009: 32). One of the contributing factors to this artificiality is arguably the emulation of the

European state model. Arguing along Lewis's (1983) lines of territorialisation and the subsequent sociological consequences, Smith (1983a, b: 27) writes:

Territorial demarcation was, as we saw, the first of the identifying features of the modern European state; in Africa, the Middle East and south Asia, where it was an external imposition, such an exclusive emphasis upon geographical boundaries was bound to contain an element of artificiality. In the event, in Africa at any rate, the lines of demarcation were, as often as not, drawn right across pre-existing ethnic and cultural groupings, so that ethnic communities like the Ewe, Somali and Bakongo, were divided up between different colonial units, usually ruled by rival European powers. As an inevitable consequence, such artificially created colonies had to rely almost exclusively upon the legitimacy of territory, and invest their boundaries with an almost sacred character, which reflected the fixities and needs of European interstate relationships. And, when it came to fostering a sense of loyalty in the culturally heterogeneous populations incorporated into a particular colonial state, it was to a sentiment of territoriality and state-wide sense of belonging that colonial rulers had to appeal, for fear of evoking alternative cultural self-definitions and allegiances.

Territoriality as the basic foundation of modern state formation needs to be complemented by another dimension and mechanism, which I call politico-legal integration. From a politico-legal standpoint, the emerging territoriality needs to be further harnessed by political and legal institutions and structures:

The establishment of a standardised and centralised politico-legal system encapsulating the whole society across geographic, linguistic, ethnic, religious, class and gender boundaries is perceived to be a necessary condition for the development of a civic nation. The politico-legal dimension refers to the development of political and legal institutions, which unite a society in such a way that it constitutes a uniform identity. (Bereketeab 2000: 55)

The colonial state imposed a system of political and legal rule on the colonised peoples. Consequently, the emerging nations were perceived as a 'group of people inhabiting a given territory and obeying the same laws and government' (Smith 1986: 135). Politico-legal integration is accompanied by a legal bureaucratic-administrative system. The bureaucratic-administrative system of rule demonstrates the development

of an overarching civil service guided by principle of the routinisation of public administration that promotes neutrality, objectivity and predictability in the treatment of citizens. It also fosters professionalism and meritocracy in the recruitment of civil servants, in which officials, as Evans (1989: 573) notes, ‘follow long-term career paths within the bureaucracy, and generally operate in accordance with rules and established norms’.

Politico-legal integration as the foundation of the formation of the colonial state was buttressed by socioeconomic integration. Imported by the colonial powers in an attempt to create a cohesive and amenable colonial society, it was informed by developments in Europe, which Smith (1986) designated as the triple revolution: socioeconomic, military-administrative and cultural-educational. Socioeconomic integration in Europe alludes to the major expansion of capitalism that occurred in the seventeenth century (Gellner 1983; Smith 1986; Tilly 1992; Armstrong 1982). The intention in Africa was thus that penetration of colonial capital should replicate this socioeconomic integration. Capitalist socioeconomy would engender modernisation, urbanisation and industrialisation, as per the objectives of the colonial civilising mission (Davidson 1992).

The three developments—territorial integration, politico-legal integration and socioeconomic integration—would supposedly cultivate a fourth dimension, notably, common history or common historical experience. Multiethnic, multilingual and multifaith groups forcibly brought together within a territorial confinement begin to build and experience a common history. In other words, a common historical heritage and cognition of a common destiny are forged (Rustow 1967; Emerson 1960; Renan 1991). The common social history that followed colonial domination was a reflection of colonial subjugation and resistance to it. The underpinning common defining social history encompassing all groups within the confinement of the territory forged a sense of common enmity to foreign subjugation embodied in the common social history. Coupled with the other three dimensions, this made possible the generation of a common national political culture.

In multiethnic societal settings, national political culture assumes an overarching supraethnic embodiment, often known as civic culture. Under this civic culture, an ethnic culture prevails that defines and represents the subnational ethnic communities. Therefore, societies are represented by dual cultures, notably, supraethnic political culture and ethnic

(subnational) community culture. This duality, with all its concomitant tensions and contradictions, then defines postcolonial African societies.

Arguably, the common political culture is anchored in overarching innovative, cognitive common political belief systems, values, norms and modes of thinking that undergird state formation. Bendix (1964: 5) explains how modernisation dictated by the colonial project of the civilising mission kicked off economic and political transformations. This is what the colonial authorities tried to impose in the colonies, albeit in a manner that benefitted their home countries. The modernisation project was what the postcolonial nationalist leaders followed. They pursued the same path, extending the colonial state formation processes and mechanisms into the postcolonial period.

The final analytical dimension, the will to live together, as a requirement for the historical sociology of state formation is presumed to develop as an outcome of the prevalence and maturity of the other five dimensions. The will to live together is fostered as an outcome of a cumulative effect of the other dimensions, which motivates and convinces people to want to live under the protection of a state that addresses their basic necessities. The growth of the will to live together is, of course, something that could only be practised in the postcolonial era.

An overriding effect of the mechanisms and processes of colonial state formation was the emergence of highly diversified and volatile sociopolitical entities inhabiting the colonial artefact of territoriality. The disruptive nature of colonial territoriality aborted the natural evolutionary process of state formation in Africa, with dire consequences for postcolonial societal reconstruction.

CONSEQUENCES OF COLONIALISM: STATE DEFORMITY

The legacy or consequences of colonialism state formation are still intensely debated. The debate revolves around the contention of whether the colonial period was of *longue durée* nature that caused a profound interruption of the evolution of indigenous processes of state formation. One strand contends that the colonial period was too brief to engender fundamental change in Africa, while another contends that colonisation elapsed with enough time to spawn fundamental structural changes. The general view is that the colonial era was too short to effect fundamental and pervasive social and economic transformation, yet was enough to disrupt the regular socioeconomic, cultural and political structures of

African societies. Ostensibly, this disruption had far-reaching implications for state formation in postcolonial Africa. Arguing in this vein, Araoye (2014: 46) explicates:

The post-colonial African state is largely a European import or graft, which perpetuates discontinuities introduced by the colonial process. The first of these discontinuities was the creation of a colonial administrative units by imperial powers in near total disregard for the populations' precolonial affinities and loyalties. Political boundaries drawn for purposes of administrative convenience or as a result of territorial trade-offs among imperial powers cut across ethnic, tribal, religious, and linguistic ties; dismembered established political units; and linked more than one precolonial political entity in uneasy administrative unions.

The colonial state grafted alien elements onto the very societal fabric and politics of Africa. The grafting was so grave and disruptive that it seems to have changed Africa in profound ways. Christensen and Laitin (2019: 201) argue that: 'The imposition of the colonial state forestalled the autonomous development of militarized proto-states throughout the African continent'. The perils of the postcolonial state are, therefore, traced back to its colonial origins. Proponents of this view purport that:

The foundationalist critique argues that the origin of the contemporary African state in the dictatorial colonial state compromises it so much that without a thorough-going decolonization of the instruments and procedures of the rule, the African state would not be able to resolve its crisis of legitimacy. For the foundationalist, the problem is at the foundation; in other words, the problem is structural or systemic. (Olaniyan 2017: 7)

The foundation thesis rightly associates the crisis of state formation in Africa with the ontological and epistemological colonial pedigree of the state (Markakis et al. 2021; Herbst 2000; Araoye 2014). To the foundation thesis could be added continuous external interventions. The predicament did not stay at the foundational level of colonial imposition; the interventions continued, albeit in a different form, after formal colonialism had ceased to exist in the context of neocolonialism, the Cold War, the global war on terror, piracy and the scramble for resources (Bereketeab 2014c; Nkrumah 1970). With regard to neocolonialism, for instance, Nkrumah (1970: ix) notes: 'the essence of neo-colonialism is that the State which is subject to it is, in theory, independent and has all

the outward trapping of international sovereignty. In reality its economic system and thus its political is directed from outside’.

The corrosive and corrupting effect of external intervention constituted a continuation of the colonial legacy, repeatedly diverting and disrupting indigenous state formation endeavours and deforming the state itself. The deformity of the state is expressed in a multitude of ways, including the mismatch between power structures and the societal fabric. The duality that grew out of the fusion that the postcolonial state came to represent is the misfit. The postcolonial state, a conflation of colonially implanted structures and derivatives of indigenous precolonial cultural heritage, underscored the ambiguities and ambivalences that characterised it (Herbst 2000; Ekeh 1975; Mamdani 1996).

Ekeh (1983: 10) notes:

the pre-colonial social structures were retarded. In other words, they remained dwarfed at the level of the pre-colonial social structures. In their linkage with the other elements of the social structures they lost their rights, either outright or in diminished proportions, while their duties remained stagnant or even enhanced.

What Ekeh is expounding here is how colonialism distorted and disoriented precolonial structures and institutions by relegating and dislocating them to the sphere of informality—to oblivion. Alien institutions and structures replaced the indigenous ones. The dislocation and deformity have had lasting and grave implications for postcolonial state formation.

Colonial intervention was an interruption of the evolution of indigenous processes of state formation. In their depiction of this, Christensen and Laitin (2019: 192) write: ‘Colonial occupation cut short this revolution. By often aligning itself with “legitimate” traditional rulers, the colonial state undermined emerging proto-states capable of independently projecting power. In this important instance, the colonial state did not upend tradition; rather, it impeded modernization’. Indeed, colonialism not only impeded but also aborted the indigenous state formation project. One impediment concerned the nature of confused power relations and parameters. Elucidating this situation, Herbst (2000: 252) observes:

The fundamental change that colonialism wrought was to forge a system of territorial boundaries that were, in and of themselves, consequential and, at about the same time, create a state system that showed the utmost respect for those boundaries. While many colonial leaders ruled core and periphery areas in a manner similar to their precolonial predecessors, their boundaries

no longer reflected how far power could be broadcast but rather, how far leaders believed their power should extend.

The territorial boundaries colonial rules constructed, and the parameters of power intended to be exercised within their confinement, not only depict the confused colonial exercise of power, but also its continuation in the postcolonial exercise of power.

This impediment is not only associated with the dislocation of space and time. Dislocation of space refers to the occupation of colonial territories by colonial powers, while dislocation of time refers to the gaps and interruptions in the process of state formation in terms of time lapses. Postcolonial state formation could, then, be interpreted as the bridging of gaps and interruptions ensuing from the dislocation of time and space. Impediments are also associated with dislocation and disruption of the evolutionary development of structures, institutions, practices, mechanisms, ethos and norms that define and determine political culture as an exercise of state power. Exercise of power as political culture is fostered in time and space in the *longue durée*.

Two other aspects of great significance in the process of the historical sociology of state formation are pacification and penetration (Migdal 1988; Araoye 2014; Chabal and Daloz 1999; Young 1994). Whereas pacification refers to a development where there exists a condition in which society displays peacefulness, harmony and serenity, where instruments of coercion become the sole prerogatives and exercises of the state, penetration denotes the state's ability to intrude in, control and manage society. The prevalence of the two is considered as a benchmark of the emergence of a modern state.

DECOLONISATION: THE POSTCOLONIAL STATE

In theory, at least, decolonisation leading to postcolonial state formation would mean relocating or restoring the space and time dislocated by colonialism. Put differently, it would mean rerouting the state formation process through space and time owned and regulated by the nationals themselves. Decolonisation, in principle, allowed nationals to sit in the driver's seat and steer the machine of state formation, hopefully in a different direction to that of the colonial drivers. The crucial question is, then, have the nationalist leaders stood up to the task?

The ambitions and aspirations of the pioneer nationalist leaders were to construct states that reflected the new era. However, although their intentions were different, what they presided over was not different from the colonial state itself (Mamdani 1996; Araoye 2014). Highlighting this Migdal (1988: 4) observes, ‘The founding fathers of new states shaped their goals on the basis of those of already established states and the dominant European national ideologies of the nineteenth century’. According to Kingsbury (2019: 8):

The rhetoric of most movements for statehood revolved around the promise that, once the colonial power had gone, the resources exploited by that power would benefit the people. That is to say, once independence was achieved, the people who had committed themselves to the liberation movement would be wealthier. The prospect of liberation often created heightened, sometimes quite unrealistic, expectations around its benefits. In practice, this has rarely been the case, and especially not in the short or even medium term.

The principal challenge that postcolonial state formation faced was to extricate itself from elements that were grafted onto the body politic and start anew; in other words, to genuinely own space and time that was occupied by the colonial state, and—most importantly—to reconstruct state-society relations that engendered harmony, stability and cohesion. The central question was what the elements were that were grafted onto the body politic of African societies.

Unfortunately, decolonisation failed to lead to the complete emancipation of the postcolonial state from mismatch grafted onto it by the colonial state. On the contrary, neocolonialism as a continuation of colonialism by other means defined the postcolonial state. Perpetuation of colonial institutions and structures, as well as the importation of new ones, became the norm. The urban/rural, modern/traditional, formal/informal binaries continued to bedevil the postcolonial state. The economy, judiciary, legislature and administration of postcolonial polity reflected and represented London, Paris and Lisbon. The most symbolic manifestation of metropolitan representation was the wigs worn by judges in many African courts.

The duality arose as a result of the cohabitation of precolonial and colonial institutional entities in the postcolonial reality, albeit with unequal status. The upshot of this institutional cohabitation was what

Mamdani (1996) refers to as ‘institutional bifurcation’ and what Ekeh (1975) calls the ‘two publics’: urban/modern versus rural/traditional. This has engendered different socioeconomic systems; one based on a modern/urban capitalist political economy and the other on a rural pastoral/farming political economy. This was further compounded by the formal/informal cleavages of political economy systems. This institutional bifurcation, in turn, led to the privileging of one system over the other, in particular, of the modern over the traditional, and the urban over the rural. Consequently, the state exclusively catered for the urban population. This, in effect, meant that the rural majority was largely alienated in the postcolonial state and in turn deprived the state of the opportunity to gain legitimacy from this constituency. A key aspect of this marginalisation was the almost total annihilation of traditional conflict-prevention and conflict-resolution mechanisms (Henderson 2015: 258; Osundare 2017), which could have played a significant role in the pacification of society and emancipation of the state (Callaghy 1984; Chabal and Daloz 1999; Young 1994).

The popular endowment of the legitimacy of the state is generally perceived to derive from traditions, institutions, identities and commonalities within multiethnic societies (Jackson and Rosberg 1984). Jackson and Rosberg claim that these attributes are markedly absent from African societies, primarily due to the colonial origins of the state and societal formation, rendering the political governance system precarious. They, therefore, recommend a special system of representative majoritarian rule that is not based on simple majority rule. A system of simple majority rule, they stress, stems from the assumption that society is an aggregation of individuals, which African societies are not (*ibid.*: 181). In other words, they contend that African societies are communitarian. A system of representative majoritarian rule also relates to the establishment of a just society and legitimate state—what exponents of social contract theory advocate. They contend that the absence of the aggregation of individuals is a source of the preclusion of many communities from state services, which motivates them to confer less legitimacy on the state.

The marginalisation and relegation of traditional indigenous institutions, authorities and mechanisms to informality have rendered the state an alien entity in the HOA. This drives a wedge between the state and society, particularly in rural regions where the state is often perceived as an enemy. This situation impedes the development of a social contract, where citizens consenting to construct a state that fits them is of paramount

importance: legitimacy revolves around state-society relations, where the state stands for the provision of basic services, while society confers legitimacy on the state. This mutuality of reaffirmation is the ideational, institutional, structural and constitutional foundation of modern society. In addition, the societies in the HOA are multiethnic, multilingual, multi-faith and multicultural, where the very nature and structure of the state spawn the marginalisation and alienation that may also take an ethnic form and constitute a source of conflict.

With regard to the nature and structure of the state as a source of conflict, Araoye (2014: 114) observes:

The sources of conflict in the post-colonial state are thus first found in its peculiar internal structure and, by implication, the structure of its inter-mestic external environment. This environment is constituted by the state system in the immediate sub-region, the collection of contending forces made up of groups whose territorial spread traverses the boundaries of the state in the system and their loyalties are primarily to the group than to the state, as well as the proto states that may periodically exist within the various post-colonial states. The post-colonial African state lumps together and attempts to superimpose an order on disparate groups that are distinguished by wide cultural and value dissonance and often traditionally hostile to one another. The internal construction of the post-colonial state and the ordering principles elicited by this peculiar construction impact on the structure of its inter-state system and the definition of the critical ground rule of inter-state relations.

Predominantly, the state is perceived as being dominated by a single ethnic group. All of the countries in the HOA display this phenomenon; even the ethnic-federal arrangement of Ethiopia could not escape ethnic domination. State ethnic domination, in turn, adversely affects the project of nation building, such that national cohesion, consciousness and a common, overarching supraethnic civic national identity are not consolidated. One of the key problems the HOA faces is the failure of nation building manifested in widespread identity-based conflicts (Bereketab 2011b; Keller 2014; Markakis 1987; Mengisteab 2014).

The diversity of Identities in the region has its challenges and potentials. Seen from this perspective, multiculturalism is observed as preventing cultural integration; cohesion is evoked as one of the factors that limits loyalty to the state and hence weakens its legitimacy. However, plurality of identity is not in itself a problem. Rather, it is the failure of

the state to manage differences of identity that poses a challenge and in turn generates identity-based conflicts (Mengisteab 2012). For example, in the event that the ruling class represents a minority, legitimacy faces considerable hurdles due to inadequate representation in government by other groups, as the Ethiopian case illustrates (Markakis 2011; Kefale 2013). Moreover, state legitimacy is forthcoming ‘when its structures have evolved endogenously to its own society and there is some level of historical continuity to its institutions. State legitimacy is thus a historical, structural, condition of the entire state apparatus’ (Englebert 2000: 4).

In addition to this general problem, national liberation states also face a problem of transition and transformation from a political culture of revolutionary liberation to a civic post-liberation one. The revolutionary legitimacy they initially claim to represent is difficult to maintain in the long run, and they often end up losing legitimacy. Sooner rather than later, national liberation states are, therefore, required to formalise state-society relations in order to forestall crises of legitimacy (Bereketeab 2018a, b). Even Ethiopia, which escaped colonisation, experienced a turbulent state formation process, facing formidable changes to progress from a feudal bourgeoisie through a military-Marxist to a rebellion (liberation) state. This process tainted the legitimacy of the Ethiopian state, since it failed to win the consent of its peoples (Gudina 2003; Markakis 1987, 2011; Tareke 1996).

The very fact that colonial state creation amalgamated polyethnic communities into the territorial state inhibited cohesion and integration, leading to problem-ridden state formation and, consequently, precarious state-society relations. In turn, this condition undermined the state’s legitimacy because of the weak or non-existent social, economic, administrative and political integration within society or the system. Instead of cohering society, states ended up with a divided *ethnos*, which thus impacted state-society relations negatively, and instead engendered state having many societies relation (a state of many ethnic groups). The outcome was the alienation of the state from society.

CONCLUSION

The historical sociology of colonial state formation represents a departure from an indigenous historical evolutionary process. As such, the colonial state was a violent reconfiguration of African societies by European

powers. The violent transgression and intervention of Western colonialism, with the purposive intention of forming African states moulded to European models, could, perhaps, be explained by the profound hierarchical conception of humanity where the white man is classified as superior and his values and norms as genuine, perfect, pristine, universal and standard. The non-white—the black man, in particular—was perceived as inferior without any worthy norms and values; if there were any, they were of an inferior nature. The remedy to inferiority was imperatively sought through overhauling any extant indigenous state and state structures and replacing them with Western ones—therefore, the violent moulding to either annihilate or recreate them, and thus the civilising mission. Colonised peoples were depicted as savages and barbarians, possessing the minds of children, and lacking the faculty for rationality, logic and reason; they were perceived only to possess emotions. They had to be saved and their rescuers were Western models.

Western norms and values, even today, are perceived as superior and universal, and the standard that others should adopt or else pay the price. The contemporary version of colonialism, postcolonialism, became neocolonialism, the war on terror, the scramble for resources and globalisation—interventionism dressed in ideologically neoliberal attire. It also became clear that postcolonial state formation could not detach itself from Western dictates. The erstwhile masters continued to maintain an iron grip on their property of yesterday. The unwillingness or inability of the postcolonial elite to shed the remnants of Western transgressions also drenched the postcolonial state formation project in failure, fragility and crisis. This unwillingness is attributed to the fact that the postcolonial elite is the product of the socialisation of Western education, philosophy and culture. This is reinforced by common interest between national political elites and Western powers in holding in check the rural sphere. The political elites remain detached from the rural masses.

The postcolonial state inherited many aspects of precolonial and colonial structures and institutions, leading to duality. This duality is primarily reflected in the urban/rural cleavage, which defines the dual political economy, often described as the capitalist political economy and agrarian political economy (modern/urban capitalist political economy and a rural pastoral/farming political economy). The failure to strike a balance within the dual legacy renders postcolonial state formation extremely unstable, conflict-prone, deficient of legitimacy, amenable to external interventions and, consequently, susceptible to all kinds of pathologies.

The colonial state as a repository of power came to represent the aspirations and interests of a small Westernised and urban-based group. This alienated the overwhelmingly rural majority. The nature and structure of the state, which is associated with its ontological origin, spurred a profound crisis. In this sense, the emancipation of the postcolonial state from its colonial legacy is of great significance to state-society relations. Emancipation of the state should be countered by the pacification of society in order for a modern state formation to take root. A non-pacified society produces societal groups and centrifugal forces that share the means of coercion with the state. The development of 2020 in Ethiopia bears testimony to the failure to pacify society, where a regional force could assault one of the cardinal institutions of the state (the military) thereby pushing the country to the brink of destruction. The plurality of centres of power that accompany the sharing of the means of coercion is an indication of the immaturity of the modern state. A plurality of power centres is reminiscent of the era of feudalism.

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The National Liberation State

INTRODUCTION

The HOA is unique in the African Continent when it comes to producing new states through national liberation struggle. Why is this so? State collapse in Somalia, isolation of and geopolitical interest in Sudan and aborted decolonisation in Eritrea may explain the quest for separate state that also bequeath the region its uniqueness. Not all national liberation movements strive for creating own sovereign state or the struggle leads to that outcome. The most prominent national liberation movements in the HOA, notably the Eritrean Liberation Movement, Sudan People's Liberation Movement, Somali National Movement and Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front, varied in their objectives, origin, longevity and size. The Somali and Ethiopian ones were insurgencies fighting for system change. They were insurgencies against dictatorship whose root causes varied. While the NL in Somaliland was spurred by failed postcolonial union, in Ethiopia, it was a case of historical old state that failed to induce equality, representation, unity and harmony among its various ethnic groups. The South Sudan movement, particularly the second (1983–2005), was also to reform Sudan's political system. Only the Eritrean liberation movement made its objectives, from the very outset, and justified by its colonial creation, to be a creation of independent Eritrea. These variations certainly impacted the nature and

performance of the national liberation state. The complex national liberation history as analysed in this chapter provides the specific feature of the HOA.

Among the historical sociology models, processes and mechanisms of state formation in the HOA accounted for in this book is national liberation state formation. While evincing many similarities with other typologies, the conception of national liberation state formation conceptually, theoretically and empirically displays considerable divergence from that of the proto-state and colonial state formations in the HOA. This chapter seeks to examine, explain and analyse this divergence.

National liberation, overall, incorporates different movements with divergent objectives. It is also important to note that tracing the genesis of entities' formation can be a very tricky business. One of the reasons for this is the question of whether the formation is a nation, a state or a region:

The objective of liberation movements could vary widely, ranging from outright political sovereignty to cultural and territorial autonomy within an existing African state. It could thus also aim at changing existing oppressive and exclusionary state structures and achieving equitable representation for pluralist identities. Such initiatives thus aim at systemic reform or regime change. Dozens of national liberation movements have achieved state power in Africa through violent popular struggles that have culminated in either outright military victory or negotiated settlement following military stalemate. (Bereketeab 2018: 3)

The variation of national liberation movements in terms of objectives as well as methodologies also dictates the form and nature of the state. Broadly, national liberation movements may deploy violence or achieve their objectives through peaceful means. This has significant implications for the state formation process. Moreover, in terms of objectives, too, national liberation movements may diverge considerably. Some may be concerned with reform or regime change; others may focus on linguistic and cultural rights, while others again seek to construct a sovereign state.

The category of national liberation state formation in the HOA mainly refers to Eritrea, South Sudan and to certain extent to the post-1991 Ethiopian state and Somaliland. The cases of Eritrea and South Sudan represent outright sovereign state formation. The cases of the EPRDF and the Somali Liberation Movement (SNM) represent reform or regime

change, though in the end the SNM ended up making a unilateral declaration of independence that did not gain international recognition. The cases of South Sudan and Somaliland differ because the latter was a colonial creation, which it could be argued is entitled to the right of self-determination, whereas the former was not a colonial creation, which from a technical perspective fails to fulfil the requirement of the right to self-determination up to and including secession. Of course, Somaliland, unlike Eritrea, consummated the exercise of self-determination and got its independence, if only for a few days. Another point of variation is whether the state formation process is top down or bottom up. Somaliland is portrayed as a bottom-up case (Jhazbhay 2009: 195), while Eritrea and South Sudan are perceived to be top down.

The post-1991 Ethiopian state is a product of national liberation rebellion, where a coalition of ethnic nationalist forces reconfigured the state as a military-Marxist state formation. In Somaliland, the SNM, which fought the Siad Barre government in collaboration with other movements, declared unilateral independence in 1991 (Walls 2014; Duale 2015). Nevertheless, so far Somaliland has not been recognised as a sovereign state. The two states that emerged out of protracted national liberation struggles also display profound differences. Eritrea, as a modern entity, was a creation of colonialism, yet was denied the right to exercise decolonisation following the demise of Italian colonialism in 1941 and tied to Ethiopia (Habte Selassie 1989; Yohannes 1991; Iyob 1995; Bereketieb 2007a). The rationale and legitimacy of the inception and conduct of the national liberation struggle as mechanism and enforcer of the right to the exercise of self-determination and state formation was therefore predicated on the colonial creation of the territoriality of Eritrea. Eritreans effectively employed, ideationally and practically, the logic of decolonisation as a principle of international law applicable to societies duly created by colonialism. South Sudan was not a separate colonial creation. Nevertheless, for most of the period of the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium period it was ruled separately. In fact, it was towards the end of the Condominium in 1947 that South Sudan was completely incorporated within it (Johnson 2011; Idris 2018a, b; Wassara 2015). Therefore, unlike Eritrea, South Sudan could not resort to the principle of decolonisation since it was not a separate colonial creation. The logic of national liberation as a means and mechanism of exercising self-determination and state formation is predicated on principles other than decolonisation.

The cases of Somaliland and post-rebellion Ethiopia as national liberation state formations also diverge from that of Eritrea. In the case of Somaliland, the territory was a creation of European colonialism. However, it was awarded independence following the principle of decolonisation and did not have to wage a liberation war. Yet, it was involved in a civil war to change a repressive system that eventually led to its self-declaration of independence and state formation. In the case of Ethiopia, there was a rebellion to change the existing exclusionary state structure. What puts Ethiopia and Somaliland on the same footing as Eritrea and South Sudan is not the objective and rationale of the armed struggle, but the post-struggle features and characteristics of state formation. These include a political culture that is defined by being highly centralised, hierarchically structured, secretive and based on absolute loyalty.

Africa is perhaps the continent that has produced the greatest number of national liberation movements and states (Bereketeab 2018). This chapter seeks to examine the development and formation of the national liberation state, and to analyse the challenges and predicaments it encounters. It also examines the specific characteristics of the national liberation state and how it differs from other forms of state. It comprises six sections: the following section examines the nature of protracted war and the role of national liberation movements; section three analyses the characteristics of the national liberation state; section four discusses Eritrea, South Sudan and Somaliland as empirical cases of national liberation states; and section five analyses challenges of post-liberation state formation. Section six provides concluding remarks.

PROTRACTED WAR AND THE ROLE OF NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS

One of the characteristic features of national liberation movements is the strategy of protracted war. Protracted war, defined in terms of space and time, represents longevity and rurality. In terms of longevity, it is accepted the struggle is going to be long and arduous. In terms of space too, the springboard of the struggle, at least initially, is remote rural space, removed from the reach of the enemy and thus relatively safe. Given the protracted nature defined in terms of longevity and particularly in terms of state formation, the seeds of infrastructure are to be sown whose harvest awaits total victory spearheaded by a vanguard movement.

Guerrilla movements and guerrilla warfare are also often associated with protracted war.

What does protracted war mean to national liberation state formation? Generally, protracted war is defined as state of affairs where the enemy is stronger than the liberation movement, yet the enemy is not in a position to completely defeat the liberation movement. Conversely, the liberation movement has not yet gained the capacity to defeat the enemy, resulting in a protracted war to change the situation. Mao Tse-Tung depicts three stages of the protracted war:

The first stage covers the period of the enemy's strategic offensive and our strategic defensive. The second stage will be the period of the enemy's strategic consolidation and our preparation for the counter-offensive. The third stage will be the period of our strategic counter-offensive and the enemy's strategic retreat. (Tse-Tung 1967: 34)

Within this period of protracted war, the liberation movement is engaged in multidimensional activities, which include building institutions, mobilising people and setting up governance infrastructure that serves current needs, but also laying the necessary foundations for the prospective post-liberation state formation that follows the third stage of counter-offensive and final victory.

The purported objective of the national liberation movement, in principle, is arguably three-fold: liberation of the country, nation state building and societal transformation. Total victory translates to the realisation of this three-fold objective. The national liberation ideology of the people's war entails the full mobilisation, enlightenment and organisation of the general population. The population is perceived to be the engine of the revolution, on whose consciousness and determination success ultimately depends. Consciousness and determination, in turn, are dictated by politico-social and cultural transformation (Cabral 1980).

A protracted liberation war plays a significant role in societal transformation—nation formation, national unity, commonality and social cohesion. The organised and conscious participation of grassroots movements guarantees final victory. Setbacks are expected, but resilience and perseverance, determination and sacrifice ensure continuation. Bouncing back following retreat is a proven strategy in a protracted liberation war. This is seen in the case of Eritrea's 1978 strategic retreat (Connell 1993;

Fikadu 2002). This reflects Mao's dictum of the long march (Tse-Tung 1967).

In some cases, the transition to and transformation of society take root during the liberation struggle within a geographic, sociopolitical space created in liberated and semi-liberated areas under the control of the national liberation movement. A parallel society, a miniature version that eventually will replace the larger society, is steadily established. Innovative political, cultural, social and economic programmes are conducted that constitute the foundation of a new society (Bereketeab 2016). State institutions, structures, governance systems and economies based on popular perceptions and participation are constructed (Pool 2001).

One of the principles and beliefs of protracted war is based on the Maoist dictum that a just war will succeed. This dictum guided the Eritrean national liberation movement, whose motto was 'Our struggle is long and bitter, but our victory is certain' (Fikadu 2008). An indication that the cause is just is that the national liberation movement represents and is the voice of the rightful struggle of people who have been denied their right to exercise self-determination and decide their destiny by peaceful means. It is a struggle for justice, equality, freedom, humanity, dignity and sovereignty. In addition, national liberation movement leans on the support, participation and ownership of the people. All this renders the struggle a legitimate people's quest for freedom, justice and equality and ultimately the right to their own statehood. It is supported—or should be supported—by international law, conventions and the UN Charter. The UN Declaration, for instance, states: 'The right of liberation movements representing peoples struggling for self-determination to seek and receive support and assistance necessarily implies that they have a *locus standi* in international law and relations' (Olalia 2019: 10).

Further, UN General Assembly Resolution 2649 (XXV) of 1970: 'Affirms the legitimacy of the struggles of peoples under colonial and alien domination recognized as being entitled to the right of self-determination to restore to themselves that right by any means at their disposal' (ibid.).

Under the aegis of UN, the debate around the right to self-determination and its instrumentalisation of the politico-military as the legitimate means to achieve it, refers to the struggle chiefly against colonial domination, racial discrimination and alien occupation (ibid.: 17). Those movements designated as national liberation movements are recognised as representing peoples who are entitled to the right of

self-determination, a right that confers on them the right to sovereign statehood. This means the national liberation movement is founded on popular backing. The principal source of the success of a national liberation movement is the support of people who believe that the cause of the struggle is right. Indeed, a movement cannot survive without the support of the people. It depends on the people for human, material, emotional, intelligence, political, diplomatic and propaganda support. Conversely, the people expect the national liberation movement to provide protection and security, and, above all, to deliver what they most crave and value—notably, independence. This cohabitation is guided by a mutually shared survival instinct.

Undoubtedly, various factors determine the success or failure of the national liberation movement. It cannot survive without popular backing, and the people expect the national liberation movement to deliver on its promise of sovereignty, which will ensure their survivability as a people, instead of extinction. In other words, a binding social contract that lays the foundation for the post-liberation state formation is idiosyncratically established. This is what political theorists designate as a social contract between state and society, in this case, between the national liberation movement and the population it claims to represent.

The conditions for the social contract need to be systematically, diligently and continuously nurtured. In order for the nurturing to take root, concerted campaigns, propaganda, education, courses, seminars, symposia, etc. are conducted under the auspices of the national liberation movement in liberated areas. Moreover, symbols, myths, fables, narratives, heroes, totems, etc. that strengthen the foundations of the claim to sovereignty are purposively and consciously constructed. Records of how these building blocks are employed in nurturing those things varies among national liberation movements. For instance, we observe great differences between the movements in Eritrea and South Sudan, as will be illustrated below. By the time independence is secured, the necessary basic foundations have been laid down, which post-liberation construction builds upon. The Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) was often described as a state in waiting, indicating necessary state infrastructure had already been laid down during the protracted liberation struggle (Connell 1993; Pool 2001).

National liberation ideology by necessity is often leftist oriented and progressive. Anti-imperialism, anti-colonialism and anti-feudalism were the slogans employed to raise consciousness and equip the masses for

struggle. Those ‘-isms’ are portrayed as enemies of the people and the causes of their suffering and underdevelopment. They are identified by the ideology of national liberation as sources of oppression of the masses. National liberation ideology as anti-(neo)liberal ideology is collectivist. Its aspirations, guided by nationalism, are to build a nation out of the multiethnic conglomeration.

Briefly, then, the protracted war fulfils two objectives. First, it is a war of liberation to defeat an external enemy. Secondly, it engages in nation building through fostering national consciousness, unity and identity. Both objectives require the mobilisation, enlightenment and organisation of the whole population, which in turn is premised on the conception and formation of a collectivist identity. Here the national liberation movements play decisive role.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NATIONAL LIBERATION STATE

A central point of departure with regard to the characteristics of national liberation is that a protracted national liberation struggle produces a specific political culture. The specificity of the political culture, in turn, dictates the nature of the national liberation state. It is claimed that the relationship between the political culture of liberation and the post-liberation state is manifestly expressed in the challenges of transitioning to a political system of civil governance.

This culture is evidently produced literally speaking in the jungle, while violent engagement between the national liberation movement and its enemies is raging. The ‘abnormal’ circumstances under which the political culture is produced makes it specific. Essentially, the specificity of this culture may bear ambivalent functions and responsibilities. The ambivalence is expressed in the fact that what served the national liberation movement well in achieving success constitutes a burden in the post-liberation construction and state formation (Bereketeab 2007b).

The characteristic of the political culture of the national liberation movement is as follows:

1. It is hierarchically structured. Orders flow from the top down, strictly following the power ladder from highest to lowest rung.

2. It is highly centralised, with power concentrated at the highest centre of the organisation.
3. It is extremely secretive; information is a privilege of a very few at the highest echelons of power, primarily to prevent information from reaching the enemy and to be able to conduct surprise attacks.
4. It is collectivist by necessity; once you voluntarily join the national liberation movement, you are required to shed your individuality. You dedicate your life, energy, time and emotions to the national liberation movement. The national liberation movement is your home, your family, father, mother, sister and brother. Your comrades take care of you when you are sick, wounded, hungry or thirsty, and comfort you when you are distressed. They are the ones who bury you when you die. You must count on their always being there for you. This produces a strong bond among comrades that lasts a life-time (Connell 1993; Pool 2001; Pateman 1990; Bereketeab 2007a: 230–231).
5. It demands the absolute loyalty of its members. Initially, members may offer their loyalty voluntarily. Once their voluntary loyalty is relinquished, however, it is converted into iron discipline, amenable to harsh sanctions. Why human beings allow themselves to be subjected to such stringent discipline is a question that needs to be left to psychoanalysis.
6. All the above characteristics are summed up in the principle of democratic centralism. As a combination of two attributions, democracy and centralism, one would expect a balance to prevail between the two. However, the truth is that centralism predominates. Democratic centralism is predicated on a doctrine that subscribes to a principle that says you should first execute an order, then ask questions. In active and constant military operations, what it implies is that one may virtually never be able to raise questions, because the likelihood of dying while executing one's duty is high. Therefore, in practice, democratic centralism is translated as a means to inculcate organisational discipline, obedience and loyalty to the leadership.

Nonetheless, it is adherence to and the efficacy of these characteristic qualities that secure the success of the national liberation movement. One would perhaps assume that without these authoritarian attributes the national liberation movement could not achieve its objective. They

constitute the political culture of the national liberation movement. This political culture not only survives outside the national culture, but also competes with it. In the post-liberation era the two cultures collide, hampering a smooth transition and transcendence to post-liberation civic culture.

National liberation movements, particularly those that have had a long lifespan, like the Eritrean one, construct parallel institutions, structures, culture, morality, ethos and psychological make-up. This indicates the emergence of a society in microcosm within the politico-military space of the national liberation movement. This society survives long after the liberation war is over and the national liberation movement becomes part of wider society. What makes the microcosmic society long-lived is the culture that is constructed, in this case, political culture. This is possible because: 'Culture is the fabric of meaning in terms of which human beings interpret their experience and guide their action' (Geertz 1993: 145). For Cabral (1980: 149), too: 'Culture, as the fruits of history, reflects at all time the material and spiritual reality of the society, of man-the-individual and man-the-social-being, faced with conflicts which set them against nature and the imperatives of life in common'. It is this political culture as the fruits of history and reflecting the reality of society that sustains the life of the microcosmic society created under the national liberation movement as it continues into the phase of post-liberation state formation. According to Calhoun (1997: 48), political culture is fostered when loyalty to constitutional or political processes and institutions that bind people together despite their ethnic differences is achieved.

In this context and in the classical sociological sense of constructing the nation state, beginning its struggle in a remote rural area, the national liberation movement gradually and systematically conducts its project of constructing the nation state. Mobilisation, organisation and enlightenment begin at village level and from there evolve to district, regional and national levels. On the way, corresponding institutions, structures and authorities are established that give the nation state its formal shape. The concomitant cumulative effects of density, concentration and centralisation are the edifice of state formation. One peculiarity of the national liberation movement is its penetrative capacity. Beginning at the village level, it penetrates the entire society, into places the colonial and post-colonial state is never capable of penetrating. For instance, the Eritrean national liberation movement, which began in the remote space bordering

Sudan, evolved over 30 years of struggle into a nation state in 1991; it built the nation state from below, from village to entire country.

One of the significant functions of the national liberation movement is the role it serves as melting pot in the process of nation formation, which is usually a great challenge pluralistic and multiethnic societies encounter. Cabral (1980: 152) elucidates:

The armed liberation struggle demands the mobilization and organization of a significant majority of the population, the political and moral unity of the various social categories, the efficient use of modern weapons and other means of warfare, the gradual elimination of the remnants of tribal mentality, and the rejection of social and religious rules and taboos contrary to development of the struggle (gerontocracy, nepotism, social inferiority of women, rites and practices which are incompatible with the rational and national character of the struggle, etc.). The struggle brings about many other profound changes in the life of the populations. The armed liberation struggle implies, therefore, a veritable forced march along the road to cultural progress.

Cabral further depicts the technological and methodological mechanisms needed to achieve it as follows:

We should add to these inherent features of an armed liberation struggle: the practice of democracy, of criticism and self-criticism, the growing responsibility of populations for the management of their life, literacy teaching, the creation of schools and health care, the training of cadres from peasant and labourer background—and other achievements. (ibid.)

Moreover, Cabral is convinced that ‘so long [as] imperialism is in existence, an independent African state must be a liberation movement in power, or it [will] not be independent’ (cited in Shivji 2003: 4). In other words, the national liberation movement plays a decisive role in the construction of society in terms of nation formation and state formation. In terms of the former, various ethnolinguistic groups are brought together and moulded into a cohesive nation. As Cabral cogently depicts it, subnational feelings, consciousness, differences and affiliations are eliminated and replaced by national ones. In terms of the latter, the formation of future statehood is also laid down. Basic functions and institutions of state such as delivery of social services, administrative functions, executive, legislative and judicial organs, community councils, etc. are established.

Of course, the rate of success varies from one national liberation movement to another. Some are highly successful (e.g. the Eritrean national liberation movement); others are less successful (e.g. the South Sudanese national liberation movement). The next section describes Eritrea, South Sudan and Somaliland. The exposition of their cases is by no means exhaustive. On the contrary, it is a sketch intended merely to provide the threads of how the cases became into being and developed.

ERITREA, SOUTH SUDAN AND SOMALILAND

This section examines three cases of national liberation state formation in the HOA that met with varying success. National liberation state formation in the proper sense needs to fulfil certain requirements. These requirements vary from legal and international laws and conventions to theoretical and conceptual categories. As observed earlier, legal and international laws and conventions refer to how the entities were created, while the theoretical and conceptual categories concern the justifications the literature on nation formation and state formation provides. The distinction is sometimes referred to as being between the juridical and the empirical. The connection of the two (legal and theoretical) is ambiguous in that, while cases that do not fulfil theoretical requirements may be granted statehood, cases that do fulfil legal requirements may be denied. There may also be cases that fulfil both sets of requirements but fail to achieve statehood, where geopolitics may play a decisive role. The three cases addressed here represent the complexity and ambiguity surrounding statehood in Africa. Eritrea achieved its statehood through military victory, while South Sudan was granted statehood through a mutually agreed upon popular plebiscite. Somaliland, despite achieving *de facto* statehood, failed to elicit international recognition of its statehood (Walls 2014; Jhazbhay 2009; Bradbury 2008; Bereketeab 2012). Overall, entitlement to the exercise of the right to self-determination is highly controversial in international law and relations (Danspeckgruber 2002).

Out of the three cases, Eritrea stands out as the case that most represents the notion of a protracted national liberation struggle laying a solid foundation for the post-liberation state formation. During the liberation struggle, the Eritrean national liberation movement effectively and firmly laid the ground for national liberation state formation. In liberated areas, a miniature state—a functional microcosm—was established, as will be

discussed in the next section. State structures, institutions and mechanisms such as legislature, executive and judiciary, and village, regional and national administrative organs were established (Pool 2001; Connell 1993). All these institutions and structures were, therefore, simply transferred to the post-liberation state formation era. Emphasising this view, Pool (2001: 159) notes, ‘the EPLF had been vigorous in making Eritrea in its image’.

The SNM in Somaliland began as part of a civil war that gripped Somalia in the 1980s (Ismail 2010: 159–61; Walls 2014: 150–1). For the larger part of its existence, the SNM operated from its base in exile, Ethiopia. It was a short period in which to lay the foundations of the post-liberation state. The SPLM never succeeded in creating a cohesive, popular liberation movement, which explains the rupture that led to civil war in December 2013. It also had ambivalent objectives, vacillating between the creation of a sovereign state and regime change. The vacillation was embodied in SPLM leader John Garang’s vision of a ‘new Sudan’. The ambivalence might have contributed to weak national identity and state formation, as well as the endeavour of societal transformation.

Eritrea

The historical sociology of modern state formation in Eritrea is associated with Italian colonialism. Eritreans’ perception and claim to statehood is therefore derived from the genesis of the colonial creation of modern Eritrea. From the very outset, Eritreans have had a clear understanding of their struggle. Eritrea’s war of liberation was defined as the quest to realise a denied decolonisation and the right to exercise self-determination (Habte Selassie 1989; Gebre-Medhin 1989; Iyob 1995; Yohannes 1991; Pool 2001). The quest to realise decolonisation and the exercise of self-determination stems from the conception of Eritrea as a colonial creation. Rallying around the aspiration of self-determination was instrumentalised in the mobilisation of the people in partaking in the war of liberation. It is a common perception that, ‘the right of self-determination has been a powerful mobilizing instrument by which to resist various patterns of involuntary governance’ (Falk 2002: 31).

Eritrea’s precolonial history is long and complex. However, we are concerned here with colonial and postcolonial state formation. As alluded

to above, modern Eritrea is a creation of Italian colonialism. The precolonial history, culture and civilisation of the people of Eritrea can be traced back thousands of years (cf. Schmidt 2009; Fattovich 2010; Medin 2017). On 1 January 1890, Italy declared the birth of its first colony in Africa, naming it Eritrea after the name the ancient Greeks gave to the Red Sea: the Erythraean Sea.

Colonialism brought different ethnic groups, regions, religions and cultures together, which constitute today's Eritrea. On the eve of colonialism, there were three distinct regions: the western and northeastern lowland and plateau region under Egyptian control; the southern highland Kebessa region under Abyssinian control; and the southeastern Dankalia region ruled by its own sultanate (Bereketeab 2007a: 66). The contribution of Italy to the making of modern Eritrea can be explained through five pivotal and interrelated measures: (1) territorial integration; (2) politico-legal integration; (3) socioeconomic integration; (4) cultural integration; and (5) the desire to live together (Bereketeab 2015b: 236–8). A combination of these variables eventually produced a supraethnic national identity and nationhood, which spawned the strong desire to create a sovereign state.

Italian colonialism laid down the necessary infrastructure for modern state formation. The foundation of the future nationalist state was, therefore, embedded in the infrastructure and institutional architecture provided by the colonial state of Eritrea. This infrastructure included all the elements that give a state its modern features: the emergence of modern urban centres; modern administrative structures; an emerging modern economy (agro-industrial projects, industries, firms, services); roads, a railway system, airports, ports, etc.; the concomitant growth of a middle class; the nascent political leadership; and a political economy that was to rock the 1940s and 1950s and, most importantly of all, which paved the way for the national liberation struggle (Iyob 1995; Gebre-Medhin 1989; Mesghenna 1988; Habte Selassie 1980). In terms of administration, the Italian colonial authorities reconfigured the territory into hierarchical and centralised administrative divisions, comprising provinces, districts, subdistricts and municipalities with corresponding political institutions and authorities. This endowed the territory with its modern politico-administrative form. Accordingly, Eritrea was compartmentalised into seven administrative divisions or provinces (Bereketeab 2007a: 81).

Italian colonialism ended in 1941 following the British victory over Italian forces in East Africa. Italian colonialism was replaced by ten years of British administration. After several years of debate—first, among the victorious allied powers at the end of the World War II, and later in the UN General Assembly—Eritrea was tied to Ethiopia in 1952 following a UN General Assembly resolution in 1950. Instead of decolonisation, the end of colonialism led to unsolicited federation and, latterly, annexation because of US geostrategic interests, which dictated tying Eritrea to US strategic ally Ethiopia (Habte Selassie 1980; Yohannes 1991; Biedemariam 2020).

The inception of Eritrea's quest for self-determination began with the demise of Italian colonialism. It was immediately embroiled in the emerging Cold War, which necessitated the abortion of a decolonisation process leading to independence. Annexation in turn ushered in 30 years of armed liberation struggle. According to Eritreans, this struggle was conducted in isolation, as the outside world virtually ignored, betrayed, neglected and abandoned Eritreans. This neglect induced the emergence of a specific political culture in the jungle, the liberated area, created and controlled by the national liberation movement. The movement, in those 30 years, produced its own society in microcosm, a revolutionary society with its own values, norms and belief system, preeminent among them the principle of self-reliance (Connell 1993; Sherman 1980; Richard 1988; Pateman 1990). This microcosmic society was the inchoate form of the prospective society to be tailored to fit to its own state, an intended outcome of the revolution.

As indicated earlier, the national liberation movement constructed a *de facto* state, including state institutions, a governance system, popular grassroots participation, public administration, small industries, health services, production of medicines, a tax levy and provision of a variety of basic social services (Connell 1993; Pool 2001). In the realm of education, the movement established schools for both the liberation fighters and the general population in liberated areas. The education system the movement established included basic literacy, and elementary and secondary education based on the curriculum prepared by the movement's department of education (Gottesman 1998; Bereketieb 2020).

The national liberation movement was able to perform two fundamental functions of state: extracting revenue and delivering basic social services. In the context of state formation, these functions represent

cardinal requirements of institution building and institutionalisation. All this, in turn, endowed the movement with the legitimacy accorded to a sovereign state in the space it carved out for itself. The secret of the movement's success partly related to the dialectical relationship between itself and the civilian population. The relationship was built on a progressive and revolutionary ideology of popular liberation.

The national liberation movement also constructed a conventional, popular army, which engaged in public social, economic and infrastructural activities that made it part and parcel of the general population. The army was organised into divisions of mechanised and marine forces, etc. and equipped with modern weapons captured from the enemy. Possession and utilisation of the means of conducting war, notably warfare technology, is another significant dimension of state formation. In the last decade of the movement, the EPLF came to possess sophisticated technology captured from the enemy, which enhanced its war-making capability. Indeed, the sophistication and huge amounts of weapons in its possession led many observers to believe that the movement was more powerful than many independent African states.

When the national liberation movement marched victoriously into the Eritrean capital Asmara in May 1991, it had already been functioning for many years as a *de facto* state in the liberated areas (Connell 1993; Pool 2001). Structures and institutions created under the movement were simply transferred during the post-liberation state formation period. The Central Committee of the EPLF, for instance, formed the legislative branch, while members of the politburo formed the executive branch of the post-liberation state. It could be argued that no liberation movement on the African continent has been able to build and function as a state in the same way as the national liberation movement in Eritrea. Indeed, given the 30-year war, its mastery of sophisticated modern weapons and capacity to conduct a successful conventional war against a powerful antagonist, it could be said that the Eritrean movement fulfils the maxim advocated by scholars such as Tilly (1975) that war makes the state.

Following a popular plebiscite, the *de jure* independence declared on 24 May 1993 ushered in the emergence of the sovereign state of Eritrea, concluding the national liberation war. In turn, this pronounced the inception of post-national liberation state formation, which encountered different sorts of challenges, as will be discussed in the next section of this chapter. The EPLF became the government of the state of Eritrea where its Central Committee constituted the national assembly (legislative

organ), members of the politburo formed a cabinet of ministers (executive organ), and several departments were converted into ministries and regional and national departments. The EPLF secretary general became president of the country. Thereby, the arduous post-liberation state formation endeavour commenced under the tutelage of the liberation movement.

As Pool (2001: 159) observes, the EPLF tried to reshape Eritrea in its image. Consequently, it indulged in reconfiguring administrative structures, drafting a constitution, establishing institutions, framing socioeconomic policies and strategies, developing political and foreign policies and strategies, and designing nation building and national unity. All this was guided by its national liberation ideology. The most consequential occurrence of the post-liberation state formation period was the second war with Ethiopia (1998–2000), which has had dire consequences in economic, political, security, diplomatic, human rights and democratic dimensions, seriously affecting state formation (cf. Bereketiab 2009).

South Sudan

Unlike Eritrea, South Sudan was not a construct of European colonialism. It was shaped and reshaped by external forces as part of state formation in Sudan. The formation process began with the genesis of Turko-Egyptian rule (1821–1885), which was succeeded by Mahdist nationalist rule (1885–1898) and then by the Anglo-Egyptian Condominium (1898–1956) (Idris 2018a, b; Johnson 2011; 2016, Theron 2022), resulting in today's South Sudan. This means, South Sudan could only claim to be a separate and sovereign territorial entity in 2011, when it emerged as sovereign state as a consequence of a referendum embedded in the self-determination agreement signed between Sudan's ruling National Congress Party and the SPLM in 2005 (CPA 2005).

The exercise of self-determination was preceded by four decades of armed struggle. State formation as in the *de jure* emergence of South Sudan is an outcome of complicated negotiations, combining political, military and diplomatic means and processes. The common perception is that international intrigues played a decisive role in blackmailing Sudan into conceding the right to self-determination through a popular plebiscite (cf. Young 2012: 89f; El-Battahani 2013: 35–36). According to the literature, the exercise of self-determination derives from two sources.

First, it is an exercise permitted to people subjected to colonial domination and as a principle of the decolonisation process. Second, it can take place as an outcome of a mutually agreed upon exercise (Bereketeab 2015a; Falk 2002). The exercise of self-determination leading to secession in South Sudan was of the latter variant.

Nevertheless, the quest for self-determination goes back to the eve of Sudan's independence. To be precise, it emerged in 1955 with the mutiny of a South Sudanese unit in the Sudanese army based in Torit, eastern Equatoria (Johnson 2016: 125). The mutiny was a prelude to a 17-year rebellion in quest of self-determination (Johnson 2016; Rolandsen 2005). There may be several causal factors behind the rationalisation of the quest for secession. One of these could have been the British system of indirect rule, which underpinned a separate identity that would legitimise secession. The system of indirect rule was expressed in the 'Policy of Southern Sudan (1930–1947)' (Idris 2018a, b: 3; Nyaba 2018: 27; Johnson 2016: 109f). During this period, southern Sudan was administratively separate from the rest of colonial Sudan. Therefore, 'South Sudan's distinctive status within Sudan provided the energy for the evolution of a Southern Sudan national consciousness independent and separate from Sudanese nationalism' (Nyaba 2018: 20). Nyaba further purports:

The 'Policy of Southern Sudan' on accounts of racial, religious and cultural disparities from the northern Sudan effectively isolated and insulated the South from the North and the rest of the world; [and] placed South Sudan's educational system, the basis of social mobility and development, in the hands of Christian Missionaries... which had the effect of producing docile social and political leaders in South Sudan who viewed politics through the lenses of colonial officialdom; and produced strong anti-Arab and anti-Islam sentiment in South Sudan, which underpinned its secessionist tendencies (ibid.: 27).

Others however reject the view of separate rule. For instance, Johnson (2016: 108) notes:

It is often claimed that southern Sudan was administered separately from the north. This was not the case. Administrators were recruited from the same manpower pool of the army and university graduates and were subject to the same administrative regulations. Governors and deputy governors of southern provinces all had experience in northern provinces. What made the northern provinces distinct from those in the south was Arabic as a widely understood lingua franca, and the application of colonial version of

Islamic law alongside local custom, both of which facilitated the rotation of administrators between provinces.

The reversal of British policy in 1947, which was intended to integrate the region with the rest of Sudan, was perhaps too little, too late. It could not spur a cohesive all-Sudanese national consciousness and identity. On 18 August 1955, the eve of independence, a mutiny broke out among southern Sudanese soldiers in the Sudan Defence Force that heralded the inception of the first civil war (1955–1972). The mutiny was sparked by suspicion and fear of domination by northern Arabs and Muslims, a clear indication of the lack of evolution of a common Sudanese identity and nationhood under British rule. Prior to independence, suspicious of the northerners, the southern Sudanese political elite was already looking for a way to ensure their rights in an independent Sudan. They sought safety in the constitutional devolution of power, which would assume a federal dispensation. If federalism was not feasible, the southern Sudanese would push for separation; the northern political elite rejected their demand (Johnson 2016; Wassara 2015; Alier 1990; Rolandsen 2005).

Following the independence of Sudan, circumstances emerged that enhanced the national consciousness of the southern Sudanese, which meant further division and distance from the emerging centre. These included defining Sudanese identity as being predicated on Arab and Islam, and the economic, political and social marginalisation and exclusion of southerners. This heralded the widening of the centre/periphery binary, not only in a geographic sense, but more seriously in the context of identity formation. These exclusionary measures further strengthened the desire of the south Sudanese to seek self-determination, aspiring to the formation of their own statehood. The first civil war raged for 17 years and ended following an accord signed in Addis Ababa.

The Addis Ababa Agreement of 1972 between the Southern Sudan Liberation Movement and the Government of Sudan provided the Southern Region, encompassing three southern provinces, with the right to exercise regional autonomy (Johnson 2016: 130). For the first time, southern Sudanese were able to exercise power in their own region (Nyaba 2018: 20). The autonomous administration of south Sudan collapsed in 1983 when the Government of Sudan, in violation of the Addis Ababa Agreement, divided the region into three and introduced sharia (Islamic law) (Deng 2010; Fluehr-Lobban 2012; Leach 2013).

These measures sparked off a second civil war, between government forces and SPLM-led southern forces, which lasted 22 years.

The SPLM under its leader John Garang proposed a vision of a 'New Sudan', which envisaged a reformed and democratic Sudan that embraced possibilities and opportunities to resolve the problem within its united body politic. Nevertheless, it was not well received by those within the SPLM who advocated for the separation of south Sudan. Eventually, it sparked off internal division and a split that undermined the movement's effectiveness and ability to win outright military victory. The realisation of the parties of their inability to win the war, coupled with strong external pressure, brought them to the negotiating table.

Following the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks on the US, the Administration of US President George Bush Administration actively engaged in the peace process, boosting mediation by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) (Johnson 2016: 145–146). This led to the Machakos Protocol, whose main provision gave the people of southern Sudan the opportunity to conduct a referendum on self-determination to determine their future. The SPLM and the National Congress Party signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in February 2005, thereby ending the civil war (CPA 2005). Following a six-year interim period, the referendum was conducted in February 2011, and South Sudan emerged as sovereign state in July the same year. Unlike Eritrea, South Sudan's secession occurred through internationally mediated negotiation, which might have had consequences for post-liberation state formation. The country was immediately plunged into formidable difficulties. Within two years, South Sudan was thrown into a horrible civil war that broke out in December 2013. Two underlying factors would explain the debacle South Sudan faced: the challenges of transition from a political culture of liberation to one of post-liberation civic governance, and the weak foundations of national political identity.

Unlike in Eritrea, South Sudan's national liberation movement never succeeded in creating a cohesive political organisation guided by a strong nationalist ideology that would forge a strong national consciousness, a common transcendent national identity, cohesive national unity and a national political agenda. The only common unifying factor for the national liberation movement in South Sudan was the common enemy to the north. Jok (2011: 2) observes:

South Sudan is only slightly more than a geographical expression. It contains more than sixty cultural and linguistic groups, each of which have a stronger sense of citizenship in their tribes than in the nation. The main glue that binds the country's multiple ethnicities together is that history of their struggle for freedom and collective opposition to the north.

Once the enemy was removed, internal divisions and contradictions replaced it. Generally, national liberation movements are credited with serving as melting pots. The metaphor of the melting pot is associated with multiethnic societal settings, where the various ethnic groups are consciously and purposively brought together and metamorphose into a cohesive common identity (Eriksen 1993: 19). In this sense, national liberation movements are supposed to build a common transcendent and overarching national identity and consciousness out of the various ethno-linguistic groups. In other words, the success of the national liberation movement, both during the liberation war as well as post-liberation state formation, depends on the foundations laid down with respect to a solid common identity and nationalism.

There is wide consensus that the SPLM failed to exert its efforts in constructing a genuine political organisation with elaborate social, economic, cultural and educational programmes that would transform the liberation fighters into citizens. The movement remained an aggregation of militias. The Eritreans forged a society in microcosm in the liberated areas, with all kinds of social services such as schools, clinics, cottage industries, local and regional popular councils, participatory democracy and national political education administered by school cadres. In short, the Eritreans created an egalitarian, self-sufficient and self-reliant society (Pateman 1990; Connell 1993; Davidson et al. 1980). The SPLM, however, did not go through such a transformation and consequently the post-liberation state formation immediately fractured along ethnic lines.

The other dimension of the challenge the SPLM faced was the transition from a national liberation culture to a post-liberation one, though it is doubtful whether the SPLM would have been able to cultivate an elaborate political culture of liberation. The most plausible development would have been a militaristic centralist culture. As explained earlier, national liberation movements forge a special type of culture during the liberation struggle, which is successful in achieving the primary objective of the struggle. The very culture that contributes to the victory of the liberation struggle, however, is a burden for the post-liberation construction and

civic governance (Bereketeab 2007b; Southall 2013). The transcendence from a culture of liberation to the endeavour of post-liberation construction proved to be an enormous obstacle. The projection of national liberation culture onto the state formation enterprise incontrovertibly generated a failed process of state formation and eventually a bloody civil war.

The newly born state was to be restructured as a unitary state with a decentralised institutional dispensation, despite strong objection by opposition groups. A three-tier state structure was proposed, as outlined in the transitional constitution:

1. The national level which shall exercise authority in respect of the people and the state;
2. The state level of government, which shall exercise authority within a state, renders public services through the level closest to the people; and
3. The local government level within the state, which shall be the closest level to the people (Government of South Sudan 2011: 15).

Accordingly, the SPLM assumed state power when South Sudan declared its independence in July 2011. In pursuit of the ethos and practices of the liberation struggle, the SPLM monopolised power. The common conception became a conflation of ethnic Dinka/SPLM-dominated state power (Jok 2011). This perception spurred opposition groups to advocate for a federal state structure during the constitution drafting process that would preclude Dinka/SPLM domination. The monopolisation of power was evidently manifested in the post-liberation constitution drafting process, which enabled the SPLM to simply ignore the views and suggestions of the opposition and introduce state structures amenable to domination by the liberation movement. Even before the proclamation of sovereignty, this generated centrifugal forces that challenged the legitimacy of the SPLM-led state formation.

The apprehension surrounding the drafting of the constitution and subsequent outcome was reflected in the powers allocated to the president, by which he could dismiss elected governors on a whim, rendering the electoral process a sham. The power conferred on the president to dismiss governors spurred critics to question the point of electing governors if they were going to lose their office because of a presidential

decision. The defective drafting of the constitution and concentration of power in the presidency were a clear indication of the malice of national liberation state formation in South Sudan. In all cases where national liberation movements turn into governments, state power is monopolised by the victorious movement (Bereketeab 2018). The case of the SNM in Somaliland may be the exception.

The cohesion of the SPLM leadership was put to the test in 2013 when vice-president Riek Machar and SPLM Secretary General Pagan Amum expressed their intention to compete for the office of the presidency in the coming election. President Salva Kiir fired them from the respective positions in June 2013 (Johnson 2016: 176). This was followed by the dismissal of the entire cabinet. Tensions culminated in the outbreak of civil war on 15 December 2013, a war that still plagues South Sudan. The main actors were the SPLM-In government led by Salva Kiir and the SPLM-In opposition led by Riek Machar, which pitched the two main ethnic groups, the Dinka and Nuer, against one another. This is an indication of the prevalence of weak national identity that could not support a state that equally represented all ethnolinguistic groups, demonstrating the precarity of post-liberation state formation.

Somaliland

In Africa, the mundane understanding of sovereignty and statehood, often termed as juridical, is often associated with the right to self-determination of people' who have been subjected to European colonialism (cf. Kuwali 2015). Embedded in the principle of self-determination and decolonisation, the enforcement of sovereignty and statehood is supported by international law, conventions and Organisation of African Unity/African Union and UN Charters. Somaliland fulfils one of the conditions of juridical sovereignty: that of having been subjected to European colonialism. Accordingly, it exercised the right to self-determination in 1960, later voluntarily joining the Republic of Somalia. Others argue that the right to self-determination is applicable to all. As McCorquodale (2010: 340 n.8, cited in Kuwali 2015: 22) outlines:

The right of self-determination applies to any people in any territory (including non-colonial territories) who are subjected to 'alien subjugation, domination and exploitation'. Indeed, it would be contrary to the concept of a human right if the right of self-determination could only be

exercised once (such as by a colonial territory) and then not again. So, all peoples in all states have the right of self-determination.

The transcendence from a political right to a human right, however, may pose its own difficulties, such as identifying who ‘the people’ are. Can any group from the same people, claiming sub-identities (e.g. at the level of clan, village, etc.) invoke the right to self-determination based on violation of basic human rights? Could Somaliland, in the union of Somalia, be considered to be subject to ‘alien subjugation, domination and exploitation’? These are critical issues that the right to self-determination duly needs to address.

For almost 30 years, Somaliland has functioned as a *de facto* state, while *de jure* status has proved difficult to earn. The genesis of territorial state formation in Somaliland can be traced back to the partition of the Somali people. The scramble for Africa, at the end of the nineteenth century, pronounced a tragedy on the Somali nation, the consequences of which still reverberate to this day. Britain, France, Italy and Ethiopia each appropriated part of the Somali nation (Lewis 2008; Elmi 2010; Walls 2014; Harper 2012). The British conquest constituted the foundation of today’s aspiration of sovereignty for Somaliland:

In 1884, the colonial powers divided the Somali peninsula into five different regions. Great Britain took the Northeast Frontier District (NDF). France colonized Djibouti and Italy controlled southern Somalia. During the ‘scramble for Africa’, Ethiopia was given the western portion of Somalia for its cooperation with the colonial powers. (Elmi 2010: 19)

The British established the colonial territory of the British Somaliland Protectorate, which they ruled until 26 June 1960. The establishment of the protectorate was preceded by several agreements signed between 1884 and 1889, between the British government and clan leaders (Harper 2012: 47). British interest in the territory stemmed from the need to supply food to troops in Aden: ‘To safeguard the supply of Somali mutton for the Aden garrison, in the 1880s the British signed “protection” treaties with a number of northern Somali clans’ (Lewis 2008: 28). Accordingly, they entered into trade agreements with clan leaders that eventually paved the way for the emergence of the protectorate (Walls 2014; Ahmed 2015). The protection treaties, however, soon transformed into colonial occupation, which angered clan leaders. The most famous

resistance leader who fought the colonial powers was the ‘Mad Mullah’, Seyyid Mohamed Abdille Hassan, who fought the British for 20 years, from 1900 to 1920 (Lewis 2008: 18; Reno 2003: 12). In his bewilderment at why the British wanted to occupy his country, he wrote a letter warning them:

I wish to rule my own country and protect my own religion... We have both suffered considerably in battle with one another... I have with me camels and goats and sheep in plenty... I will not take your country. I have no forts, no houses... no cultivated fields, no silver or gold for you to take. If the country was cultivated or contained houses or property, it would be worth your while to fight... If you want wood and stone you can get them in plenty. There are also many ant heaps. The sun is very hot. All you can get from me is war, nothing else... if you wish peace I am also content. But if you wish peace, go away from my country (cited in Gesheker 1985: 17).

Following the demise of Italian East Africa in 1941, all Somali territories apart from French Somalia were brought together under British rule. The UN passed a resolution authorising Somalia’s independence after ten years of trusteeship. On 26 Jun 1960, Somaliland got its independence and five days later joined Italian Somaliland, upon the latter’s acquisition of independence on 1 July, to establish the Republic of Somalia. Soon the people of Somaliland came to regret the decision to join the union (Duale 2015; Ahmed 2015). Twenty years later, in 1982 the SNM launched an armed struggle against the Siad Barre regime from its base in Ethiopia (Ismail 2010: 195). The SNM was one of many rebel movements that fought the regime in Mogadishu (Jhazbhay 2009: 34). Initially, the SNM’s objective was to get rid of the Siad Barre regime. Once the regime had been deposed, in 1991 the objective changed and the territory declared its unilateral independence. This declaration was based on the principle of colonially created territories’ right to self-determination. As such, its legal foundation is presumed to be the territoriality that was created by British colonialism.

In its armed resistance against the Siad Barre regime, the SNM demonstrated an ability to establish governmental institutions and democratic dispensations, necessary building blocks of state formation:

The political maturity and legitimacy of the NSM can first and foremost be seen in the way it structured its internal governance and administration – something which more resembled a government-in-waiting than a rebel group. Between its inception on 6 April 1981 and the date of the total liberation of the northern regions in early February 1991, the SNM held six nationwide congresses and succeeded in changing its leadership six times through a peaceful transfer of power. (Duale 2015: 114)

The leadership of the SNM was less inclined towards the secession of Somaliland. It was a popular push that induced the aspiration of sovereignty. Between 1991 and 1993, serious meetings took place with the intention of bringing peace, stability and reconciliation, and to determine the future of the territory (Duale 2015; Jhazbhay 2009; Walls 2014:

The process was initiated with numerous local peace conferences throughout the region and culminated in the Grand Boroma Peace Conference, which brought together more than five hundred elders. The Grand Conference lasted for more than six months and succeeded in establishing a framework for peace, the basic structure of which helped to significantly diminish the level of fighting and violence in Somaliland as compared to other parts of Somalia, particularly Mogadishu. (Lederach 2013: 53)

The declaration of independence was decided in meetings that involved clan elders:

The elders and other democratically selected representatives forced the SNM, against its will, to announce the creation of the independent Republic of Somaliland on 18 May 1991... This declaration was accompanied by the establishment of an SNM-led interim government. Its administration was based on the SNM's organisational structure, with its chairman, Abdulrahman Ali 'Tuur', appointed as the country's first executive president. The SNM central committee functioned as the government's first parliament. (Jhazbhay 2009: 39)

This measure sparked the inception of the de facto sovereignty of Somaliland. As a de facto state, over the past 30 years Somaliland has been widely praised for demonstrating impressive achievements. Since 1996, it has achieved peace, security, stability and democracy. It has conducted several national elections in which power has successfully been handed over to the victorious party. Somaliland's commendable achievements in

ensuring peace, security and democracy—highly rare commodities in the region—are attributed to its adoption of hybrid political system. A political system consisting of two chambers was introduced, ‘comprising a bicameral parliament with an upper house of elders (*Golaha Guurtida*) and house of representatives (*Golaha Wakiilada*); and an independent judiciary’ (Jhazbhay 2009: 41). This is often presented as the epitome of a successful hybrid of modern and traditional institutions (Bradbury 2008; Walls 2014). Compared to postcolonial state formation elsewhere in Africa, Somaliland’s hybridity is a heuristic for innovation in state formation that should be adopted.

CHALLENGES OF POST-LIBERATION STATE FORMATION

The historical sociology of national liberation state formation is riddled with multiple challenges. The factors that determine the success of the liberation movement, and the transition from liberation political culture to civic political culture, constitute formidable challenges to post-liberation state formation. The responsibility usually rests on the shoulders of the liberators, who arrogate upon themselves the right to construct the state. Nonetheless, this arrogation is imbued with a number of challenges. One has to do with what I call national liberation political culture, constructed and matured during the liberation struggle as an alternative to a conservative national culture.

The national liberation movement, in a protracted war of liberation, produces a national liberation political culture endowed with specific features that assist victory in the struggle. Some of the features of national liberation political culture are: tight centralisation, hierarchically structured organisation, the demand for members’ absolute loyalty and collective responsibility. These are the necessary qualities that will secure victory in the struggle. With regard to the Eritrean national liberation movement, for instance, many observers have highlighted the strong discipline, organisational tenacity, centralisation, efficiency and work ethos of the EPLF, which ensured final victory and independence (cf. Connell 1993; Pool 2001; Pateman 1990; Davidson et al. 1980).

In the post-liberation state formation, however, the attributes of national liberation political culture prove to be an impediment. The inability to transfer and transform from a political culture of liberation to one of civic post-liberation is a daunting prospect for post-liberation state

formation. The first challenge has to do with the fact that stakeholders other than the liberators are excluded from the process of post-liberation state formation. This exclusionary measure not only marginalises and alienates important sections of society from the process of construction, transformation and development, but also plants divisions and grievances in the society that eventually generate conflicts, instability and state fragility. There emerges a clear division between the ‘liberator society’ and civil society, where the liberator society captures the state, while civil society is completely excluded. This division into two parallel societies is an indication of a divided polity. It could be compared to what Mamdani (2017: 16) designated the bifurcated state. In a similar way to how the colonial state creates a bifurcated state, the national liberation movement creates a bifurcated society.

A second challenge pertains to reforming the national liberation political culture that was fostered under the national liberation struggle and transferred to the endeavour of post-liberation state formation. The transformation and transition from the national liberation political culture to post-liberation civic political culture is of paramount significance to post-liberation state formation. This means normalising the process of state formation since it signifies transcendence of the revolutionary state formation.

A third challenge is socioeconomic. Abysmal poverty, underdevelopment and pervasive unemployment in societies in conflict or post-war societies are aspects the national liberation state is compelled to grapple with. National liberation movements exposed to protracted armed struggle usually inherit a completely devastated country. The consequences of the war itself, neglect, lack of investment, migration and displacement contribute to the destruction of vital national institutions and infrastructure such as schools, clinics and hospitals, roads and railways, residential areas, industries and economic enterprises, etc. Movements’ ascension to state power is therefore fraught with formidable socioeconomic challenges. The revival of socioeconomic institutions and infrastructure may take years. This in turn deprives the agents of post-liberation state formation of vital resources that are necessary for state legitimacy. A state that fails to deliver basic services cannot expect to earn legitimacy from its citizens. In a nutshell, post-liberation state formation is characterised by specific elements, notably, revolutionary legitimacy, the incumbency of liberators of state power, a national liberation political culture and liberation ideology (Bereketeab 2014a, b, c: 49).

Environmental degradation is another challenge and a consequence of protracted war. Wars destroy countries' flora and fauna. Warring armies—and particularly guerrilla armies—consume wood for their energy needs, cutting down and destroying trees. In addition, tanks and armoured vehicles roaming around environmentally sensitive ecosystems cause huge amounts of destruction and toxic emissions from artillery also cause pollution. All of this causes environmental degradation, which affects socioeconomic rehabilitation. It brings structural and institutional impacts on livelihood models and the production of life-sustaining crops, particularly in rural areas, which contain the most vulnerable sections of society. Some of the failures of post-liberation state formation relate to environmentally induced resource shortages, which affect social service delivery capacity and, in turn, state legitimacy.

Provision of basic services is a cardinal function of a state. A state that cannot or is unwilling to deliver social services sooner or later will suffer a deficiency of legitimacy. Of course, combinations of factors and structures affect deliverability of social services. The legitimacy of a national liberation state that is based on revolutionary legitimacy and delivering independence will soon deteriorate if the post-liberation state fails to deliver basic provisions in its functions.

The relationship with the 'mother' state from which it separated has decisive significance. The relationship may have an enabling or hampering role in the process of post-liberation state construction. One of the factors that may have a strong influence in the relationship is geographical proximity. Proximity is relevant, in proportion with outstanding or unsettled issues between the old state and new state. If the old state has lingering grievances or claims, the relationship will be complicated, leading to the ignition of a new war. This has been seen in all the cases under consideration. A border issue that triggered war between Ethiopia and Eritrea related to the factor of proximity in stable post-liberation state formation. After the separation of South Sudan from Sudan, borders—in particular, the Abyei issue—became a source of continuous dispute between the two countries (Johnson 2016: 171). Although Somaliland is still not recognised as an independent state, border disputes around Sool and Sanaag regions constitute a serious bone of contention between Puntland and Somaliland (Hoehne 2015). All this has negative implications for the emergent post-liberation state formation process.

The form of state structure the national liberation movement opts for may also have implications for the post-liberation state and nation

building project. Whether the state system chosen is federal or unitary plays a role. The nature, strength and cohesion of the national liberation movement during the liberation struggle may determine the state system chosen. The three cases at hand—Eritrea, Somaliland and South Sudan—were different in many aspects that defined their post-liberation performance. The SNM became strong only towards the end of the Siad Barre regime, when the movement was forced to move its base to Somalia after a rapprochement between Mengistu and Siad Barre in 1988 (Walls 2014: 157–158). The period of time that followed, during which the Siad Barre fell, was too short to enable the construction and nurturing of a national liberation political culture. The SPLM also had little success in fostering a cohesive national liberation political culture. Out of the three, the EPLF could be considered successful in fostering a strong national liberation political culture. Overall, the transition from national liberation political culture to civic post-liberation political culture and state formation is fraught with formidable challenges.

CONCLUSION

This chapter sets out to interrogate the typology of state formation in the national liberation state. The chapter sought to explain and analyse the characteristic features of national liberation states. To that end, it identified the defining features of the national liberation state dictated by national liberation culture and ideology. The chapter demonstrated how features of national liberation culture and ideology that were fostered during the liberation struggle and transferred under post-liberation civic governance constitute challenges of transition from national liberation political culture to civic post-liberation political culture and state formation.

The exposition also showed how the challenges of transition and transformation render the national liberation state formation project precarious and fragile. One of the challenges pertains to victorious national liberation movements tending to run the post-liberation society according to a liberation culture ethos. Victorious movements assume absolute domination of state power, from which other stakeholders and society in general are marginalised and excluded.

The SNM in Somaliland seems to be exceptional, in that it tried to strike a balance between traditional and modern institutions and

authorities, and permitted the participation of society in the state formation process. Perhaps the relative weakness and lack of cohesion of the organisation came as a blessing in disguise. The SNM leadership almost collapsed following the demise of the Siad Barre regime. This situation compelled the SNM to surrender power to elders who secured a smooth transition. Moreover, the failure to elicit immediate recognition for its unilateral declaration of independence might also have contributed to the level of unity demonstrated in Somaliland.

The strength of the EPLF in Eritrea, however, would neither permit the participation of opponents nor the surrender of power to society. The EPLF constructed strong institutions, state structures and a cohesive leadership during the liberation struggle, which proved formidable to change in the endeavour of post-liberation state formation.

In South Sudan, the SPLM was not a coherent organisation, but the weakness of society allowed it to monopolise power. Hence, the SPLM not only failed to provide proper governance but also became a source of division and conflict that ultimately led to bloody internecine conflict.

While lack of *de jure* recognition might have contributed to a hybrid state formation model in Somaliland, Eritrea's isolation certainly contributed to an unconventional state formation process that was grounded in self-reliance and autarchic policies. In South Sudan, on the other hand, lavish international support seriously undermined and corrupted the state formation project.

The variation in the three national liberation movements explains the variation in the political systems they established in their respective countries following the end of the liberation struggle. Just as there are demonstrable differences between each of the typologies of national liberation state formation, there are also differences between the liberation movements as agents of state formation. The main difference and challenge, however, is the inability to transition to and transform into a civic state formation. This difficult transition, which engenders precarity in state formation, is a common phenomenon the national liberation state shares with the postcolonial state formation.

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CHAPTER 6

State Legitimacy and Government Performance in the Horn of Africa

INTRODUCTION

Legitimacy and performance are core features of matured state. Modern and fully matured states are therefore expected to earn legitimacy and perform adequately in delivery provisions. History, origin and structure of the state have certainly impact on the legitimacy and performance of the state. We have identified in this book three models of state formation, notably proto-state, colonial state and national liberation state. Would these divergent models of state formation be translated into divergence of legitimacy and performance too? Sources of legitimacy in the three models are different. Generally, all types of state exhibit deficiency of legitimacy and feeble degree of performance. Legitimacy and performance are inversely related to the level of provision of services. The inversion presents itself while delivery of basic service would earn legitimacy the absence of provisions which would inversely engender denial of legitimacy. Similarly, inadequate performance inversely affects legitimacy of state negatively. The correspondence or lack thereof is an expression of inversion. The HOA states exhibit chronic deficiency of legitimacy and

This chapter is partly derived from an article published in *African Studies* in March 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00020184.2020.1724767>.

performance. This could primarily be explained by the incompleteness of the state formation process, which justifies the quest for the study of state formation in the region.

This chapter examines the legitimacy of the state and government performance in the HOA. It argues that the origin of the state and successive external interventions have destabilised and distorted the legitimacy of the state in the HOA. The chapter contends that state legitimacy determines government performance and vice versa. The HOA—consisting of Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Djibouti—is a region that is highly affected by conflict.¹ Indeed, the HOA suffers from convoluted pathologies that are a clear illustration of deficiency of legitimacy. Multifaceted sources underpin the pathologies afflicting the HOA. They include conflicts, state crisis, lack of development, environmental degradation, youth unemployment and migration, and external interventions (Bereketeab 2013; De Waal 2015; Mengisteab 2014; Schmidt 2013; Tvedt 1993; Woodward 2006, 2013; Yordanov 2016).

The variables certainly feed into each other. The origin and structure of the state constitute crucial contributing factors to these concerted pathologies. With the exception of Ethiopia, the HOA countries are colonial constructions and even modern Ethiopia was a product of the colonial period (Markakis 1974; Tareke 1996; Zewde 2001). Eritrea and South Sudan emerged as sovereign states following protracted liberation struggles, which spawned challenges in the transition from of national liberation political culture to post-national liberation civic culture (Bereketeab 2018a; Young 2012). The current ethnic federalist state in Ethiopia is also an outcome of decades of festering ethnic nationalist rebellion that brought about a novel experiment in state reconfiguration but proved difficult to implement (Gudina 2003). This historical turmoil has distorted state legitimacy and government performance in the region.

The chapter discusses theories, concepts and sources of legitimacy. It examines the structural and historical origins of the deficit in legitimacy and factors that foster it, as well as conditions that disrupt the social contract between state and society. The role international interventions play in terms of the social contract and their adverse effects on

¹ There are different definitions of the HOA. For this paper, I use the definition of the HOA as consisting of the six countries. The rationale behind the selection of the six countries is that all suffer from intra- and interstate conflicts that are intimately connected, which warrants treating them as a single unit of analysis.

domestic legitimacy is also briefly examined. The chapter concludes that inverted legitimacy leads to chronic crisis and the malfunctioning of the state. It critically examines the factors that contribute to the deficiency of legitimacy and abysmal government performance.

The chapter consists of six sections: the following section discusses the sources of state legitimacy; section three discusses theories of state legitimacy; and section four, government performance. Section five analyses the situation in the HOA. Finally, section six provides concluding remarks.

SOURCES OF STATE LEGITIMACY

The literature on state legitimacy refers to two sources: internal and external (Coggins 2014; Jackson and Rosberg 1984; Osiander 2001). The general presumption is that the two confer legitimacy on the state, but it is important to note that internal and external notions of legitimacy do not always coalesce equally. Rather, they are characterised to varying degrees by an inverse relation. Indeed, over time, states do suffer from deficiency of one or the other source of legitimacy. Quite often, states—particularly developing societies—may suffer from a deficiency of both. This legitimacy deficiency thus underpins chronic state crises in the HOA.

Postcolonial African states were granted international legitimacy once they had achieved sovereignty due to the global system of states (Henderson 2015). Sovereignty endowed erstwhile colonial entities membership as equals in the club of states. From the very outset, however, the postcolonial state was deprived of internal legitimacy since it was not an outcome of the consent of its citizens. This situation therefore led to juridical statehood, but was devoid of empirical *de facto* statehood. In juridical or *de jure* statehood, sovereignty is a provision and function of the system of international law and the international state system (Watson 1990). Although the state may not have control over the entire territory it purports to own, which is the presupposition in normal or ideal circumstances of complete sovereignty, it is afforded external legitimacy (Henderson 2015: 117; Jackson and Rosberg 1982). In this form of state legitimacy, it may suffice for the government to control only the capital city. The rest of the territory may fall under the control of hostile forces or could be a no-man's land.

The historical roots of the juridical source of state legitimacy are associated with the Peace of Westphalia, signed in 1648, which came to regulate interstate relations and founded the global system of states (Kreuder-Sonnen and Zangl 2014; Araoye 2014; Watson 1990). The Peace of Westphalia was predicated on three conjectures: sovereignty and equality of states, territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of member states (Evans and Newnham 1990; Coggins 2014: 8; Morgenthau 1985; Oslander 2001: 261; Teschke 2002). As long as a state behaves properly in the international arena, it garners international legitimacy (Jackson and Rosberg 1984: 184). Oslander (2001), however, is highly critical of views that purport that the Peace of Westphalia was the foundation of state sovereignty and territorial integrity; he calls it the ‘Westphalian myth’. For Coggins (2014), too, state legitimacy is vested in external rather than internal prerogatives. She further notes:

Actors may demonstrate a number of qualities indicative of internal sovereignty: standing military, popular authority, a system of taxation, contested elections, heads of government, and other officials. Without recognition, those actors may be many things: secessionists, liberation movements, insurgents, anti-colonialists, terrorists, ethnic rebels, or indigenous people, but they may not be states... Without external recognition, even the most internally sovereign actor cannot function as a state outside of its borders. (Coggins 2014: 27)

Coggins’ conceptualisation is true with regard to two dimensions of legitimacy. The first concerns *de jure* legitimacy, which is juridical existence, where the state is received as an equal in the club of states. The second dimension concerns initial entry into this club. Once an entity enters, however, it cannot survive on external legitimacy alone for long.

Nevertheless, international legitimacy, predicated on the Peace of Westphalia global system of states—which respects sovereignty, non-intervention and equality—is progressively being eroded by the celebration of neoliberal humanitarian intervention (Kreuder-Sonnen and Zangl 2014). Geostrategic politics based on the supremacy of big powers may easily obliterate national leaders perceived to be non-compliant with geostrategic politics, something that was unthinkable a few decades ago; Saddam Hussein in Iraq and Muammar Gaddafi in Libya are good examples (Downes 2011; Held and Ulrichsen 2011). Additional consequences are violations of territorial integrity, national sovereignty and unity (Gagro

2014). Generally, however, African leadership is more vulnerable to internal than to external forces. Subsequently, there are more intrastate than interstate wars (Henderson 2015: 120–21). When international legitimacy is devoid of domestic legitimacy, it generates elite insecurity, where the state security apparatus is deployed against internal opponents; this internal suppression in turn creates dissent and rebellion (Coggin 2014)—the very situation leaders intend to avoid. Inverted legitimacy therefore produces internal instability and, by extension, international (external) instability (Henderson 2015: 124).

External legitimacy derives from a number of sources. One source is, as mentioned, the Westphalia-driven state system. This system privileges the sovereignty, integrity and equality of states, irrespective of their size, power or wealth. In accordance with the global system of states, states are protected by international law enshrined in the UN Charter and other international institutions and conventions. External legitimacy is also harnessed through the development of a constellation that Wendt and Barnett (1993: 334) call an ‘informal empire’, where there is some kind of patron-client relationship between the ‘dominant’ state, which has a significant degree of *de facto* political authority over the security policies of another ‘subordinate’ state. Since the client state lacks internal legitimacy and perceives a security threat emanating from its own citizens rather than from other states, it depends on military supply or support from the patron state to bring the internal threat under control. This is why throughout the postcolonial period, France, for instance, has regularly intervened in its former colonies to save an incumbent regime from internal rebels (First 1970; Schmidt 2013: 180ff). Describing this situation, Busch (2017) notes: ‘Acting as a general command, the Cell [African Cell] uses France’s military as a hammer to install leaders it deems friendly to French interests and to remove those who pose a danger to the continuation of the system’. This inverse legitimacy produces an inverse constellation of security arrangements. When the threat is internal, the government seeks external military support; when the threat comes from outside, however, the government seeks support from its own population and carries out intensive popular mobilisation that increases its internal legitimacy (Henderson 2015).

Post-Cold War neoliberal interventions are systematically and consistently eroding the principles of mutual coexistence, sovereignty and the integrity of nations (Kreß 2014). Increasingly, small nations pay the price of such developments. Indeed, without changing the UN Charter,

big—mainly Western—powers are changing the rules of the game. The erosion is predicated on the promotion of international neoliberal values, norms and belief systems that are rapidly assuming universality (Poku and Whitman 2018). The neoliberal revolution (Harrison 2010) is striving to rearrange the global system of states in order to ensure it maintains Western domination. The much-celebrated responsibility to protect (R2P) doctrine, adopted by the UN General Assembly, has also ended up as a new instrument in the neoliberal intervention drive (Gagro 2014; Glanville 2012; Welsh 2010; Zaum 2012: 53), a clear manifestation being the North Atlantic Treaty Organization’s conversion of R2P into regime change in Libya. Hence, the big powers’ selective implementation of the R2P principle—to serve their own geostrategic interests—undermines the principle’s integrity and credibility. As Held and Ulrichsen (2011: 4) argue: ‘Responsibility to Protect became discredited or associated with militaristic western-centric approaches’. This selectivity has been flagrantly exercised in Iraq, Libya, Syria, Yemen and so forth (ibid.).

The dangers of the current neoliberal drive manifest in various ways. First, the existing UN Charter, as well as international conventions and laws, is being violated. Second, it fails to provide an alternative model of statehood, nationhood and genuine international relations. Third, the non-Western world perceives this neoliberal drive as perpetuating Western imperialist domination (Tom 2017: 89–90; Welsh 2010). Fourth, it is destroying relatively stable nations, thereby engendering wars, conflicts, mayhem, state fragility and collapse. This, in turn, is producing radicalism, extremism and fundamentalism of all kinds. It is making the world dangerously uncertain, unstable and precarious (Fig. 6.1).

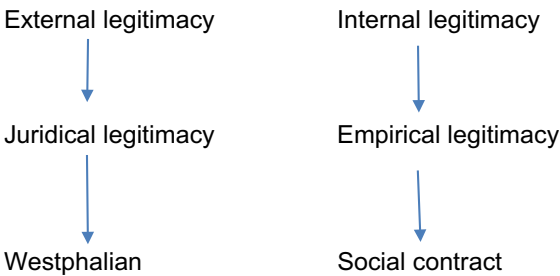


Fig. 6.1 Sources of legitimacy (*Source* Author’s own, based on the general literature)

DEFINITIONS OF LEGITIMACY

There are numerous ways of defining legitimacy. One refers to distinctions between traditional and modern meanings of the term, stating that a government or sovereign prevails in accordance with law or principle. Another distinction refers to conforming to a rule or principle, in other words, lawfulness (Schaar 1981: 19–20). This general understanding springs from the notion that governments or states need to justify their power: ‘All governments need to legitimize their rule, to justify their right to promote their authority as a means to gaining popular support, or at least, acquiescence, without which they are likely to collapse’ (Reyes 2010: 146).

Schaar (1981: 20) writes that the term legitimate expresses, ‘(a) a status, which has been conferred or ratified by some authority, (b) conformable to law or rule [...], (c) normal, regular, conformable to a recognized standard type, (d) sanctioned by the law of reasoning; logically admissible or inferable’. According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, legitimate means ‘(1) lawfully begotten; (2) real, genuine; not false, counterfeit, or spurious; (3) accordant with law or with established legal forms and requirements; lawful; (4) conforming to recognized principles, or accepted rules or standards’.

In its internal dimension, legitimacy is defined as the ‘recognition of a state and its government as rightful by its popularity, which during the modern era has increasingly meant a popular recognition democratically expressed’ (Jackson and Rosberg 1984: 177). ‘Legitimacy facilitates the exercise of authority in a system, and makes it more acceptable’ (Watson 1990: 106). Authority is exercised not as a result of constitutional promulgation by the state, but rather as an outcome of practice. The practice is then codified to form rules. Practice is legitimised through time and custom (*ibid.*). In the latter sense, over time and contingent on spatiality, practice is codified to constitute a rule that citizens automatically recognise and abide by. Codification of practices thus generates formal institutionalisation that may be enhanced by jurisdictional promulgations.

In his seminal definition of legitimacy, Weber distinguishes between convention and law. As Hermann referring Weber note, ‘Conventions entail mere voluntary compliance while law entails compliance at the threat of sanctions’ (Hermann 1983: 4–5). Violation of convention

provokes social sanctions such as boycotts, social disapproval and isolation. Violation of the law, on the other hand, provokes legal sanctions enforced by specialised agencies such as the police, judges, prosecuting attorneys, administrative officials, prisons and so forth, and legal sanctions are intended to cause physical or psychological coercion (*ibid.*: 5). Weber's definition, however, differs from that of legal positivists. For Weber, crude force is not necessary to compel observance; social sanctions are enough to engender compliance. A legal system is legitimised, says Weber, once those subject to it obey the laws it promulgates. Two things are of great importance here. The first is acceptance of the legal order (law) as valid. The second is acceptance of the validity that should motivate compliance. Citizens' compliance with the legal order is what confers legitimacy on the system. Others stress that deliberation in decision-making confers legitimacy on political processes that increase the degree of compliance (Barnett 2006). Compliance rests on two aspects. One concerns objective fear of sanctions or expedience, while the other concerns subjective, intrinsic value. Weber's emphasis is on the sociological rather than the legal. Sociological norms, values, belief systems and rites are more effective in bringing durable compliance than mere coercive legal instruments.

CONCEPTUALISING LEGITIMACY AND PERFORMANCE

This section discusses how we conceptualise legitimacy and government performance. Overall, we can discern three notable theories of state legitimacy: (1) the Weberian trinity: charismatic, traditional and rational-legal; (2) social contract theory; and (3) performance theory. Among these, Weber's monumental trinity theory has been the most influential theoretical position concerning legitimacy.

A plethora of theoretical strands related to the three theories mentioned above provide numerous analyses and explanations of state legitimacy. Underpinning the three distinctions is a specific historical, political, cultural and socioeconomic societal formation. Two cluster of such theoretical approaches are—juridical legitimacy and empirical legitimacy (Henderson 2015). These two theories stem from the conception of whether legitimacy is derived intrinsically or extrinsically, that is, whether it derives endogenously or exogenously. Juridical legitimacy concerns an extrinsic dispensation. It focuses on the external state system that confers legitimacy on states. Intrinsic legitimacy theory explains the circumstances

and situations that produce internal, empirical legitimacy. Intrinsic legitimacy explains how and when the state earns legitimacy from its citizens. Internality of legitimacy dictates state-society relations. It is a condensed and associated expression of social contract theory.

Broadly, while the rational-legal may correspond to bureaucratic legitimacy, social contract-based legitimacy refers to state building: state-society relations. The latter explicates the evolution of the state and how it relates to society in its quest for legitimacy. Performance legitimacy refers to the democratisation process, as well as revolutionary situations. It describes a particular form or historical stage of state formation and how that particular state relates to society in its quest for legitimacy. Below, I will briefly discuss the three theories, beginning with Weber's trinity.

WEBER'S TRINITY THEORY

Weber (1948) provides a three-variable theory of legitimacy: charismatic, traditional and rational-legal. The first two are of a personal nature, while the third is of a legal nature (Cotterrell 1997). Charismatic legitimacy is a trait of an extraordinary personality with a special gift of grace. The leader exhibits unique devotion, personal confidence in revelation, heroism or other individual leadership qualities (Cotterrell 1997; Gerth and Mills 1948). This personality trait or quality confers legitimacy on the system. Charismatic legitimacy is, however, time bound. To overcome temporality and ensure continuity, charismatic legitimacy eventually embarks on routinisation and institutionalisation (Schaar 1981: 15). With the death of the charismatic leader, the likelihood of the death of the Movement is greatly increased. To preclude the demise of the movement following the death of the leader, charismatic legitimacy needs to be converted into non-personal institutions and bureaucracies.

In traditional legitimacy, the powers of the leader spring from customary practices. It invokes myth, magic or the authority of God (Reyes 2010). For example, practices have been in operation for many generations, which people have recognised, lived and complied with, undergird traditional legitimacy. Also, compliance with the patriarchal order demonstrates belief in the legitimate authority and its source. Further, practices, customs and habits that have existed for generations invoke emotion and familial loyalty and attachment to the system and the authority it upholds.

Legal-rational systems, on the other hand, confer legitimate power to impersonal organs. Here, the formal and rational manner by which legitimacy is gained makes it of great significance. For a legal order to be legitimate, it only needs to adhere to the formal procedural requirements of law (Hermann 1983: 15). Modern state authority cannot be derived from either charisma or tradition (Cotterrell 1997). Legal domination is an essential prerequisite for the bureaucratic administration on which modern authority is based. Legitimacy is claimed to spring from the 'will of the people as reflected in the results of elections and written constitutions' (Reyes 2010: 146). Power is attained through a legally codified constitution anchored in open and transparent and competitive politics. As it is the law (constitution) that brings a person to power, the law also removes them from power in a peaceful and orderly manner. The rational-legal order is intimately connected with the emergence of the modern state, which profoundly shifts power relations and the nature of authority and, in turn, the sources of legitimacy. The modern state, unlike the absolutist or feudal state, rests on formal democratic principles. Legitimacy is therefore to be sought through democratic channels and processes at the ballot box (Held 1995).

In a nutshell, the structure of authority in the three typologies of legitimacy are: personal rule found in the charismatic; patriarchalism in the traditional; and bureaucratic rule in the rational-legal (Cotterrell 1997). It should, however, be noted that the three typologies are not always found in strict separation. In other words, there could be a blend within a particular time and space.

Weber emphasises how law is administered rather than how it originates. What is important for Weber is that law 'is administered by a specialized staff charged with the particular responsibility of enforcement' (Hermann 1983: 6). Therefore, it is seen as, 'a theory of law that emphasizes the mode of administration of rules or norms' (ibid.: 7). Whether these rules or norms are organised by a sovereign, a group of individuals or an aggregation of groups is of secondary importance.

SOCIAL CONTRACT THEORY

Social contract theory addresses the obligations, commitments, responsibilities and materialisation of healthy, functional, beneficial and successful relations between state and society. A social contract in its various forms attempts to explicate the genesis and formation of state and society, and

relations between the two, as well as the foundation and development of those relations. Moreover, it attempts to explicate the gains and losses of the evolution, consolidation and sustenance of the relationship. The formation of societies and states is briefly expressed by the notions of *pactum unionis* and *pactum subjectionis*. While the former refers to the formation of society, the latter refers to the formation of state (Laskar 2013). The first stage of the social contract concerns establishing a just society; the second stage concerns establishing a sovereign or a state endowed with legitimate powers of coercion. Both address the question of justice and legitimacy, respectively (Neidلمان 2012).

Social contract theory is grounded in the works of scholars such as Thomas Hobbes, David Hume, John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (Faison 2016; Hermann 1983: 12–13; Laskar, 2013; Neidلمان 2012). However, these classical political philosophers of the social contract diverged in their understanding of it. As the promulgators of social contract theory diverge, so too do their theories. Some scholars even claim that the social contract is a myth, that it never took place. For philosophers such as Hobbes, the social contract was precipitated by the lawlessness of nature (Mouritz 2010). For Hobbes, the social contract was emancipatory. In his view, in accepting the social contract, individuals who agreed to ‘give their liberty into the hands of a sovereign, liberated themselves from a life that is solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short’ (Encyclopedia Britannica). For Locke, on the other hand, the state of nature represented a ‘golden age’. It was a state of peace, goodwill, mutual assistance and preservation, ‘of perfect and complete liberty to conduct one’s life as one best sees fit’ (Laskar, 2013: 3). The state of nature recognises the right of life and property (Mouritz 2010: 126); thus, ‘the obligation to obey civil government under the social contract was conditional upon the protection not only of the person but also property. If a sovereign violated these terms, he could be justifiably overthrown’ (Encyclopedia Britannica). For Rousseau (1988), the *volonté generale* (general will) should inform the moral character of the government where governing rests on the consent of the governed. The social contract, in this sense, is the product of people’s agreement—for their mutual protection—to surrender individual freedom of action and establish laws and government, which means that they acquire a sense of moral and civic obligation (Encyclopedia Britannica). In social contract theory, compliance with the legal order is of great significance (Hermann 1983: 14).

At the centre of social contract theory stands the relationship between state and society. The fundamental assumption rests on the prediction that state and society will contribute equally to fostering legitimacy. The state is expected to deliver basic services that include security, health, education, infrastructure, employment, food, shelter, clothing and so forth. Society will then respond by conferring legitimacy on the state by allowing it to rule. This rule, however, should rest on reciprocity, on the consent of those ruled. Adherents of the liberal state advocate that the state can only provide security of life and property. The state admonishes you not to:

Do not take matters into your own hands, do not resort to any and all means to protect yourself and your goods, but transfer your authority to us, and though we cannot guarantee that you will never be harmed or robbed, we will make every good faith effort to provide defense for your life and property.

Do not take matters into your own hands, do not resort to any and all means to secure material goods, but transfer you authority to us, and though we cannot guarantee that you will never be without adequate food, clothing, and shelter, we will make every good faith effort to provide you with these necessities. (Faison 2016: 4)

If the state ceases to provide services and members are compelled to make their own arrangements outside the state to survive, it means going back to a state of nature. It also constitutes a breach of contract, rendering the state illegitimate and its existence redundant. For the individual, it is a double loss: of freedom as well as survival. In the conceptualisation of Locke and Rousseau, when a government fails to fulfil its obligations, citizens have the right—the duty, even—to withdraw legitimacy, even to rebel.

PERFORMANCE OR REVOLUTIONARY LEGITIMACY

Unlike the Weberian trinity, performance legitimacy rests on practical action and the corollary of results. The sources of legitimate authority emanate from the credentials of the revolutionary movement or leadership. The credentials rest on the actual performance. One type of performance is revolutionary performance. This constitutes revolutionary legitimacy, which is endowed upon a movement or leader on the basis that they led a revolutionary struggle and delivered the preferred outcome.

The national liberation movement is one of these, as it fights for self-determination or reform (Bereketeab 2015, 2016, 2018a, 2018b). Delivery is understood as achieving the popular objective of the struggle, the common good. National liberation movements that succeed in bringing independence or change of government are usually rewarded with recognition and acceptance of their authority as bearers of state power.

These movements capitalise on the fact that they led the liberation struggle and ensured its success, which is considered the ultimate popular goal. They therefore assume that this entitles them to the leadership of the nation in the post-revolution era, too (Melber 2007; Salih 2007; Southall 2013). The general population also supports them, at least initially, in their claim to entitlement. They earn this entitlement through the personal sacrifices they made for the cause. Any criticism or opposition coming from those who did not participate in the struggle for the cause is simply rebuked on the grounds that they did not contribute, so they do not have the right to criticise, let alone to share state power. This is what guides national liberation movements that ascend to power following a protracted armed struggle (Bereketeab 2018a, 2018b). Generally, the people also sympathise with and accept these movements' claims.

Instead of seeking legitimacy at the ballot box, national liberation movements seek it by making promises that they will replicate the miracle they performed during the liberation struggle. The history of the revolutionary liberation era performance repeats itself. The general population is therefore asked to trust the movement and be patient. Any deviation from the official version and the norm, in perception or interpretation, is perceived as betrayal, disloyalty and ingratitude. According to Johnson (1999), revolutionary authority is that of people committed to the transformation of their social, political or economic order. He contends that legitimisation derives from the state's achievements, rather than from the way it comes to power. In this context, the manner of ascension to state power is not significant. What is of significance is what is going to be done with the power that has been secured. The lofty promise of generating economic, social, cultural and political transformation undergirds the legitimacy of state power holders.

In conclusion, it is therefore possible to discern three conceptions of legitimacy endowment. The first refers to political representation or the equal distribution of power. This is evidently elitist; it concerns power sharing among elites. The second conception is concerned with delivery

of basic common goods. This refers to the state's ability and willingness to provide basic services to the general population in exchange for permission to rule. The third conception is performance or revolutionary legitimacy, which characterises liberation movement governments. This final understanding promises social transformation for the better; by its very nature, it is ephemeral.

GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE

The concept of government performance is used and defined in multiple ways depending on the purpose, discipline and by whom it is used (Coggburn and Schneider 2003; Ford 2016; Fukuyama 2013; Knott and Payne 2004). For the purposes of this book, government performance is conceptualised as how the state performs in its provision of services, which may increase or decrease its legitimacy capital. Two notions are conflated to tease out the political and administrative/managerial and practical dimensions of implementing decisions and policies regarding service provision. Governance may imply the day-to-day running of the state/government, comprising administrative/managerial and political functions. The political pertains to decision-, legislation- and policy-making processes, while the administrative/managerial pertains to processes and mechanisms by which political decisions, legislation and policies are implemented. The administrative or managerial dimension is associated with the bureaucratic organs of the state.

Arguing in this line, Fukuyama (2013: 350) defines governance as a government's ability to 'make and enforce rules, and to deliver services, regardless of whether that government is democratic or not'. Moreover, Fukuyama observes that governance is about the performance of agents carrying out the wishes of principals. In this context, governance relates to translating decisions and policies into practice, while performance relates to how effective and efficient that translation is. Performance is gauged against how effectively and sufficiently policies and political decisions are implemented, but also to how equitably and justly, and the degree to which societal services are delivered. The state's ability and willingness to provide basic social services thus constitutes government performance. A state may have ability but lack willingness; conversely, it may have willingness but lack ability. States with the capability and willingness to provide efficient, regular, equitable and just social services proportionally increase their level of legitimacy.

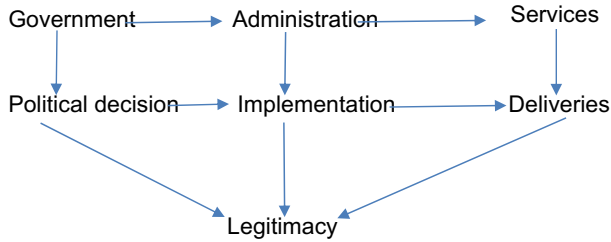


Fig. 6.2 Government performance (*Source* Author's own, based on the general literature)

Government performance is one indicator of state legitimacy. States that fail in the performance indices do not elicit legitimacy from society. Nevertheless, it is significant to note that legitimacy is not the same as performance. While performance or performance failure are measured by how duties such as basic service delivery are executed, legitimacy is conferred upon a state by its citizens, as well as the international state system. Performance failure may occur due to lack of capacity, resources or external interference, among other things, yet a state can still earn legitimacy. Conversely, a state may perform well—from a technical perspective, for instance—yet still suffer from a deficiency of legitimacy if it fails to represent identity groups. Measured against all the social service indicatorseconomy, health, democracy, human rights, conflict prevention, environmental degradation, youth unemployment and gender inequality—the states in the HOA have considerable limitations. This will be illustrated in more detail in the next section (Fig. 6.2).

HORN OF AFRICA: THE DEFICIENCY OF, OBSTACLES TO AND SEARCH FOR LEGITIMACY

Following the conceptual and theoretical discussion, I now examine the empirical case of the HOA. This section will interrogate the empirical manifestation of state legitimacy and performance in the HOA. The central concern of this empirical section is (the lack of) state legitimacy and performance in the HOA, and the range of factors which affect it. Among these factors are: (1) the origin and formation of the state; (2) external intervention; (3) the relationship between state and society

(nation building); and (4) festering conflicts and concomitant instability and underdevelopment.

The HOA has earned a reputation as a region that suffers from convoluted pathologies. Most conspicuously, the HOA suffers from state crises, rampant conflict, environmental degradation, underdevelopment and external interventions (Bereketeab 2013; Woodward 2013; Mengisteab 2014). The sources of these pathologies are multiple. Perhaps the source *par excellence*, which could also account for the lack of legitimacy, is the ontology of the state, notably the very creation of the state. In the HOA, as discussed elsewhere in this book, there are three kinds of states—speaking in general or specifically about the HOA: proto-states, colonial states and national liberation states. These could be said to engender three forms of legitimacy. Ethiopia is a proto-state, yet its modern formation can in large part be attributed to colonial era collusion between Emperor Menelik II and European imperial powers Britain, France and Italy (Bulcha 2002; Markakis 1974; Tareke 1996; Ullendorff 1973; Zewde 2001). Sudan, Somalia and Djibouti are creations of colonialism, while Eritrea and South Sudan emerged as sovereign states following protracted liberation wars. Arguably, the way these countries came into being has certain implications for their current form and scope of legitimacy. As colonial creations (or products of the colonial era), states in the HOA are commonly perceived as social misfits, which helps to explain their festering conflicts. They are perceived as such because they are incompatible with colonially imposed structures, institutions, authorities and mechanisms on the one hand, and indigenous structures, institutions, authorities and practices on the other, both of which coexist in parallel (Ekeh 1975, 1983; Mamdani 1996). This in turn has spawned a number of consequences.

In terms of legitimacy, the major consequence of the colonial as well as national liberation ontology of the state in the HOA is the destruction or relegation of indigenous institutions to informality. The formal precolonial institutions were relegated to informality under colonialism, a status that continued even in the postcolonial era (Ekeh 1983; Englebert 2005; Herbst 2000). The postcolonial reality, however, has had to come to terms with two sets of institutional arrangements, leading to duality (Tom 2017: 28). This duality in the HOA arose as a result of the cohabitation of the precolonial and colonial institutional entities in the postcolonial reality, albeit with unequal statuses. This phenomenon of institutional

cohabitation which Mamdani (1996) refers to as ‘institutional bifurcation’ and what Ekeh (1975) calls the ‘two publics’: urban/modern versus rural/traditional is also clearly manifested in the HOA, which coupled with the highland-lowland cleavage render the region amenable to all sorts of pathologies. This has produced different socioeconomic systems in the HOA: those based on a modern/urban capitalist political economy system and others on a rural pastoral/farming political economy system that underpin the crisis in the region. This is further compounded by the formal/informal cleavages of the political economy system widely reflected in the HOA. This institutional bifurcation, in turn, has led to the privileging of one system over the other, in particular, privileging the modern over the traditional and the urban over the rural as well as farming over pastoralism. Consequently, the state exclusively caters to the urban population. In effect, this has meant that the rural majority has largely been alienated in the postcolonial state, and in turn has deprived the state from gaining legitimacy from this constituency. This explains the prevalence of rampant conflicts bedevilling the HOA. As the general literature indicates, a key aspect of marginalisation has been the almost total annihilation of traditional conflict prevention and resolution mechanisms (Henderson 2015: 258; Osundare 2017), as Callaghy (1984), Chabal and Daloz (1999) and Young (1994) also explain, which could have played a significant role in the pacification of society and emancipation of the state.

Jackson and Rosberg (1984) remarked that popular endowment of the legitimacy of the state is generally perceived to derive from traditions, institutions, identities and commonalities within multiethnic societies. This is also very true in the state formation in the HOA where the role of those institutions is marked by its absence. Jackson and Rosberg claim that these attributes are manifestly absent in African societies, primarily due to the colonial origin of the state and societal formation. They therefore recommend a special kind of system of majoritarian representation that is not based on simple majority rule which could play positive role in the HOA too. Majority rule, they stress, stems from the assumption that society is an aggregation of individuals, which African societies are not (*ibid.*: 181), applicable to HOA societies too. It also relates to the establishment of a just society and legitimate state, which exponents of the social contract advocated. They contend that the absence of aggregation of individuals excludes many communities from state services, which discourages them from conferring legitimacy on the state. This is typically the case in the HOA.

The marginalisation and relegation of traditional indigenous institutions, authorities and mechanisms to informality has rendered the state an alien entity in the HOA. This alienation drives a wedge between state and society, particularly in rural regions where citizens come to perceive the state as an enemy. This situation impedes the development of a social contract where citizens consenting to the construction of a state that fits them is of paramount importance: legitimacy revolves around state-society relations where the state stands for the provision of basic services, while society confers legitimacy on the state. The state in the HOA is a victim of this deficiency. It is presumed that this mutuality of reaffirmation is the ideational, institutional, structural and constitutional foundation of modern society in the HOA. In addition, in societies in the HOA that are multiethnic, multilingual, multifaith and multicultural, the very nature and structure of the state spawns marginalisation and alienation, which may also take an ethnic form and constitute a source of conflict. In these cases, the state is perceived as being dominated by a single ethnic group. All the countries in the HOA display this phenomenon; even Ethiopia's ethnic federal arrangement has not escaped ethnic domination (cf. Kefale 2013). State ethnic domination, in turn, adversely affects the project of nation building in the HOA, such that national cohesion, consciousness and common overarching supraethnic civic national identity are not consolidated. One of the key problems the HOA faces is the failure of nation building manifested in widespread identity-based conflicts (Bereketeab 2011; Keller 2014; Markakis 1987; Mengisteab 2014).

The diversity of identities in the region has its challenges and potentials. The idea that multiculturalism prevents cultural integration and cohesion is invoked as one of the factors that limits loyalty to the state and hence weakens its legitimacy. However, plurality of identity is in itself not a problem. Rather, it is the failure of the state to manage differences of identity that poses a challenge and in turn generates identity-based conflicts. For example, in the event that the ruling class represents a minority, the legitimacy of the state faces considerable hurdles due to inadequate representation in government by other groups, as the Ethiopian case illustrates (Markakis 2011). Moreover, state legitimacy is forthcoming 'when its structures have evolved endogenously to its own society and there is some level of historical continuity to its institutions. State legitimacy is thus a historical, structural, conditions of the entire state apparatus' (Englebert 2000: 4). In addition to this general problem,

national liberation states also face the problem of transition and transformation from a political culture of revolutionary liberation to a civic post-liberation political culture. The revolutionary legitimacy they initially claim is difficult to maintain in the long run, and they often end up losing legitimacy. Sooner rather than later, national liberation states are therefore required to formalise state-society relations in order to forestall crises of legitimacy (Bereketeab 2018a, 2018b). Even Ethiopia, which escaped colonisation, experienced a turbulent state formation process, progressing from a feudal bourgeois state to a military-Marxist state and then to a rebellion (liberation) state. This process tainted the legitimacy of the Ethiopian state, since it failed to win the consent of its peoples (Gudina 2003; Markakis 1987, 2011; Tareke 1996).

The very fact that colonial creation amalgamated multiethnic communities into territorial nations inhibits cohesion and integration and thus leaves nation building problem ridden and, consequently, state-society relations precarious. In turn, this condition thus undermines legitimacy because of the weak or non-existent social, economic, administrative and political integration within the society or the sociopolitical system. Instead of cohering society, regions such as the HOA end up having states of a divided *ethnos*, which disrupts state-society relations, and instead engenders state-many societies (multiethnic) relation.

In addition to the colonial origin of the modern state in the HOA, successive external interventions throughout the postcolonial period have disrupted and distorted state legitimacy in the HOA. The Cold War, the war on terror, the fight against piracy and the scramble for resources that have dogged the HOA have created an inverted legitimacy—states easily elicit external legitimacy but have weak internal legitimacy. During the Cold War, the superpowers shaped their respective client states. While the US abetted and advised the imperial regime in Ethiopia and the regime of Gaafar Mohamed El Nimieri in Sudan, the Soviet Union abetted and advised the Siad Barre regime in Somalia (Yordanov 2016). France protected its interests through supporting a family dynasty in Djibouti (Shehim and Searing 1980). The very existence of regimes in HOA depended on the support of their patrons. When the US and Soviet Union abandoned them, the regimes of Siad Barre and Mengistu collapsed (Yordanov 2016). The dependence of regimes on external actors has hampered natural evolution in state-society harmony. Indeed, external support was employed in the suppression of and aggression towards society; external support ensured regimes' survival. Therefore, society was

rendered helpless against the combined manoeuvring of the state and its external patrons.

How does this lack of legitimacy impact government performance in the HOA? Theoretically, the state is expected to provide basic services. Government performance is therefore measured against indicators of service provision: social (e.g. education, health, shelter, housing, etc.); economic (e.g. employment, food, growth, etc.); political (basic civic and political rights, freedom of speech, democracy, elections, etc.); security related (e.g. peace, stability, protection of life and property, territorial integrity, etc.); law (rule of law, the constitution and constitutionalism, due process, equality before the law, etc.); humanitarian (e.g. respect for human rights, right to life, etc.); and identity politics (e.g. fostering social harmony, unity, nation building, ensuring equality, sense of belonging, etc.).

The global war on terror necessitated supporting client groups in Somalia; the US Central Intelligence Agency funded the warlords of the Somali Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism over the Union of Islamic Courts (UIC) (Samatar 2013: 170–171). The UIC had succeeded in creating a semblance of a state in the war-torn country for the first time in 15 years, thereby earning qualified legitimacy in the eyes of the population. However, external actors who detested the politics of the UIC decided to vanquish it and instead bring in the unpopular Transitional Federal Government (Harper 2012). The Transitional Federal Government never earned internal legitimacy from the Somali people, but could survive because it was protected by external legitimacy drawn from UN, European Union, African Union and donors, a legitimacy that was rebuked by other stakeholders in Somali society.

US President Barack Obama visited Ethiopia just a couple of months after the highly contested elections of May 2015, and praised the regime for conducting democratic elections where the ruling EPRDF had claimed 100% of votes cast, endowing the regime with legitimacy. In November 2015, a massive peaceful popular uprising paralysed the country, compelling the regime to declare a state of emergency as Ethiopian society rejected the election result, thereby denying the regime internal legitimacy. The situation in Ethiopia grew worse until there was reform in 2018. Following the change of leadership and the reform process, the country was plunged into crisis.

Such examples abound throughout the HOA and indicate how the inverted nature of state legitimacy prevails in the region. President Ismail

Omar Guelleh of Djibouti changed the constitution in 2010 in order to enable him to run for a third term, against the wishes of the opposition parties. The regime's service in the global war on terror and the fight against piracy allow it to get away with grave violence, without any reaction from the international community. This silence confers inverted legitimacy on the regime. In Sudan, displaying signs of 'political cannibalism' following the outbreak of civil war in December 2013, the SPLM government lost both internal and external legitimacy. The national liberation state formation process there is imbued with serious problems. Both Sudan and Eritrea have uneasy relations with the Western world, which undermines their external legitimacy. To compensate the external legitimacy deficiency, the Eritrean government embarked on massive mobilisation of its citizens that so far has proved very effective in providing that.

As mentioned earlier, modern states are expected to base their exercise of political power on democratic principles and practices. It is assumed that a democratic state has a greater chance of eliciting legitimacy. Juxtaposed against this perception, states in the HOA display considerable democratic deficiency. This, in turn, adversely affects their legitimacy. Undergirding democratic deficiency is also pervasive underdevelopment and abject poverty that characterise these societies. A state displaying a veritable legitimacy deficiency will also suffer from poor government performance.

Moreover, states in the HOA display deficiency in their provision of services. This is a breach of the social contract that is supposed to bind state and society in the HOA. This breach delegitimises the state, where it can only enforce its existence and relevance by coercion. Many of the states in the HOA therefore compensate the internal loss of legitimacy with external legitimacy, which makes them highly unstable. Despite the differences that exist among the states in the HOA, the search for state legitimacy continues at full pace.

CONCLUSION

This chapter sets out to examine state legitimacy and government performance in the HOA. It sought to trace sources, theories and concepts of legitimacy. Following analysis of the origins, evolution, theory and sources of legitimacy, the chapter discussed the deficiency of legitimacy in the HOA. It also demonstrated how the deficiency of legitimacy is

intimately associated with government performance, and how the latter impacts on legitimacy. The colonial origins of the state, coupled with consecutive external interventions, deranged and distorted state legitimacy and government performance in the HOA. The diversity of societies in the HOA has also adversely affected relations between society and the state. The colonial state and its successor, the postcolonial state, were characterised by institutional cleavages and tensions represented by the urban/rural dichotomy. Predominantly representing the urban middle class, the state alienated the majority rural population and lost their trust. This alienation of the majority constituted a major source of legitimacy deficit. It also led to what some call state deformity. A deformed state is usually characterised by a deficit of legitimacy and tenuous government performance.

The national liberation state pursued the same *modus operandi* as the colonial/postcolonial state. The national liberation state displays a different level of capacity regarding two dimensions. The first is the level to which it penetrates society. The second is that it elicits its legitimacy from revolutionary performance. One pathology the national liberation state suffers from is its failure to undergo a transformation from a national liberation political culture to post-liberation civic political culture. This failure is responsible for precluding the evolution of plural state institutions. The state therefore suffers from a lack of or inadequate institutionalisation, and marked instead by individual or group domination of power. Usually, this occurs at the expense of other stakeholders, denying the post-liberation state necessary legitimacy capital.

Both postcolonial and national liberation states in the HOA display glaring legitimacy and government performance deficiencies. Hence, both types of state are chronically affected by conflict and crisis. A state suffering from rampant conflict and crisis is unable to provide basic services, not because it lacks the will, but because it lacks the capacity and resources. Instead, the state finds itself in a continuous struggle for survival. This survival-centred state struggle neglects, undermines and marginalises society, adversely affecting state-society relations—the social contract. This means that citizens do not have the right—or duty—under social contract theory to withdraw legitimacy or even depose a government that fails to fulfil its tasks.

Another element that strongly contributes to state legitimacy and government performance is the flagrant presence of external interventions. Consecutive external interventions have often served regime

survival at the expense of citizens' rights, and have distorted legitimacy by tilting the balance towards external legitimacy. Indeed, external intervention in the HOA is perceived as a major contributing factor for the suppression of internal resistance.

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Common Characteristics of the Three Typologies of State Formation: Synthesis

INTRODUCTION

A synthesis intends to bring together the different component elements of a book and produce an aggregation. This chapter seeks to highlight common denominators of the typologies of state formation this book is based on. The HOA, as a region, would manifest many commonalities, as composition of individual states also would manifest different features. The commonalities could be condensed in the rampant conflicts, state crisis, poverty, underdevelopment, youth unemployment and migration, environmental degradation, drought and famine and external interventions. The difference, primarily concerns the different histories, routes and processes of state formation of the individual states. This complexity in unity and diversity gives the region its peculiarity. At the end, from social science perspective and for the purpose of generalisability what matters most is the search for commonality. Therefore, the chapter analyses the common characteristics of the three typologies of state formation in the HOA.

Preceding chapters have examined the three typologies of the historical sociology of state formation. In Chapter 2, I demonstrated the routes of the historical trajectories of the three typologies of state formation. Figure 2.1 illustrates not only the emergence of respective states, but also the branching out and metamorphosis that gave rise to a subsequent form of state. While Chapter 3 examined proto-state formation, Chapter 4

examined colonial state formation, followed by Chapter 5, which analysed national liberation state formation. Chapter 6 analysed state legitimacy and government performance. The chapter sought to interrogate how the state, deriving from the three models of state formation, fared well in the scale of legitimacy and performance.

In this chapter, I examine the convergence of basic features of the models that enable us to make inferences and suggest synthesis. One of the convergence points is associated with functions. Regardless of the history of the genesis, processes, models, structures and mechanisms of formation of the different states, all of them ultimately exhibit a number of essential properties. One of these concerns functions. All states have common functions irrespective of their size, structure, pedigree, history and processes. The primary *raison d'être* of a state is to maintain basic functions such as territorial sovereignty and integrity; central governance, security and control; and, above all, a monopoly on the means of violence.

Depending on their developmental trajectory, states display varying degrees of divergence in fulfilling their functions. Western states, which have more than 500 years of state formation behind them, have huge comparative advantages in capacity and efficiency in fulfilling their functions compared with African states that have only existed for 60 years. Many scholars of state formation, however, forget this considerable historical difference as they ahistorically judge the functions and performance of African states. Another dimension of the ahistoricity of scholarship is the perception of the unviability of the colonially transplanted state and the conviction that Africa should extricate itself from the grip of the colonial state or Western model (Davidson 1992; Markakis et al. 2021), while failing to provide a viable alternative. This book advances the notion of striking a balance between the double heritages—precolonial and colonial—of the postcolonial African state.

The point of departure of this work is that all states basically have the same functions, but they differ in capacity and efficiency in fulfilling them. Another important factor that determines state formation in Africa is that, unlike in Western states before them, their gestation process is occurring in an era of globalisation, where autonomy, sovereignty and respect for territorial integrity are challenged from below, not only from above, which was a luxury in the era of state formation in the West. This development produced the discourse on the postmodern state (cf. Araoye 2014), which passed judgement on the end of the nation state. Africa

is not allowed to either choose, design or determine its level of development, or to implement and own the process and model of state formation that fits it. Rather, as Haggmann and Peclard (2011: 2) observe:

The global diffusion of a set of normative state ideas which derives from the European historical experience explains why African states are often identified as failed not only by what they are, but by what they are not, namely, successful in comparison to Western states.

This chapter seeks to describe and analyse common features defining the three types of state that constitute the central theme of the book. The intention is to move towards synergy and synthesis and identify and analyse some of the central common characteristics. The chapter consists of four sections: the following section discusses common state functions; and section three discusses centripetal and centrifugal forces. Section four provides concluding remarks.

COMMON STATE FUNCTIONS

States are often described as stemming from structural or functional dimensions (Araoye 2014). In the functional approach, they are imparted with certain functions that describe their *raison d'être*; whereas the structural approach attributes the existence of the state to structural realities and behaviours. Arguably, in the historical sociology of state formation, structure and function mature over the *longue durée* and intermarry, giving the state its morphology, which is gradually converted into culture. This process of conversion into culture might be what explains variations between states. This variability accentuates historical routes and trajectories.

This section discusses state functions. It proposes that the basic and universal functions and characterising features of all states are to: (1) provide socioeconomic services; (2) provide peace and security; (3) guarantee territorial integrity; (4) engage in revenue-generating activities or levying taxes; (5) engender national cohesion (nation building); and (6) conduct international relations (cf. Elias 1994; Migdal 1988; Bayart 2009). Whether a proto-, colonial or national liberation state, a state should be able to exercise these minimal functions. Discharging them adequately, properly, efficiently and equitably confers legitimacy on the

state. All these lie at the centre of social contract theory, dictating state-society relations. This section will briefly analyse these six variables, which define the common features of states.

Socioeconomic service provision as a cardinal function of the state is an activity that links proto-, colonial and national liberation states. Moreover, socioeconomic provision in a developing society is a defining factor in the state-society relationship, determining conditions for legitimacy. In a Western setting, a state that fails to deliver socioeconomic services is in real trouble. The fate of the incumbent government is contingent on socioeconomic service delivery. A government that depends on winning at the ballot box for its incumbency has to make sure that it is capable and willing to deliver, otherwise it will find itself out of a job at the next election. In Africa, on the other hand, socioeconomic service delivery is still at an inchoate level. This is primarily due to dearth of capacity, which means citizens are compelled to look for alternative ways to access services or abstain from getting them. This dearth of state capacity invites non-state actors to step in, which in turn erodes state legitimacy and can lead to state crisis.

In a context where state capacity is deficient and the domestic private sector is also extremely weak, socioeconomic service delivery is taken over by external actors, such as donors, missionaries, international non-governmental organisations, multilateral organisations and private international commercial institutions, undermining the very formation of the state. All states more or less attempt to provide at least some socioeconomic services. Social services provision such as education, health, caretaking of the elderly, employment and infrastructure (schools, roads, housing, communication, ports and airports) are not only basic necessities of society, but also constitute a benchmark for the level of development.

Economy, the other aspect of socioeconomic provision, embodies citizens' economic wellbeing, which springs from the overall cumulative wealth of a nation. In this sense, the state is also tasked with the production of national wealth; where there is no national wealth, there can be no distribution or allocation of amenities. Where the private sector is weak, the public sector assumes the chief role not only in the production of wealth, but also in the distribution and equitable allocation of that wealth among citizens. Job creation in the private and public sectors, and access to jobs/work/employment for all citizens, are connected to justice, fairness, equality, inclusion, and citizens' civic and political rights. This in turn reflects the prevalence of state-society relations based on

harmony, cohesion, maturity, representativeness, inclusivity, balance and care. Furthermore:

Stated in political terms, the quest for human dignity is translatable into a demand for recognition and respect for human beings, both as individuals and as members of identifiable groups, for freedom from domination, equitable participation in political, economic, social, and cultural life, and for a fair share in the distribution of national wealth, services, employment opportunities, and resources for development. Human dignity demands, in other words, equal treatment with full rights and duties of citizenship. But, at a minimum, it requires basic protection and provision of survival needs – safety, food, shelter, medicine, family, and resources for a self-sustaining lifestyle. (Deng et al. 1996: 19)

The second function of a state is peace and security provision. It is commonly understood that without peace and security there can be no development. According to social contract theory, in the first place the state was conceived by citizens giving up some of their rights in exchange for peace and security. Conversely, it is understood that development contributes to peace and security, thus there is reciprocity. The state as war maker and peacemaker (Tilly 1975) has central responsibility in fostering peace and security, and boosting development. The legitimate monopoly of the means of violence renders the state the key player in peace and security in society. Strong and weak states alike are expected to accomplish this cardinal function.

The third function, territorial integrity, is one of the cornerstones of the state's responsibilities. Indeed, it could be asserted that the emergence of the state is intimately connected with territoriality. In other words, statehood is defined in terms of the delineation and demarcation of a certain territory. From a politico-geographic perspective, the central function of states is to preserve, maintain and defend the unity and integrity of that territory. All states are measured against the extent to which they fulfil this function. Territorial integrity is a significant measure of a state's viability, which has dimensions of externality and internality. In terms of internality, it pertains to physical definitions, delimitations and delineations through which citizens develop affinity to and identification with state and a shared feeling of community and nationhood.

It is a mechanism, as Rokkan (1975) describes, by which inclusion and exclusion lead to the identification of 'us' and 'them', and imagined

community (Anderson 1991) is fostered. In terms of externality, territoriality lays the foundation for international recognition and membership of the international club of states (cf. Osiander 2001; Evans and Newnham 1990; Morgenthau 1985; Coggins 2014). Moreover, a state's viability is appraised based on its capability to fend off external violations and interventions that undermine its integrity and capacity for survival. Internal and external violations and interventions can cause state failure and, in the worst case scenario, collapse. An illustration is the inability of the Somali state to fend off internal and external assaults, which led to its demise.

The three functions depicted thus far are supported by the fourth state function; notably, collecting revenue or taxation. Scholars of nation formation place great weight on the emergence and role of taxation: 'Within historical sociology as well as economic and financial history, the development of taxation is usually situated as central to processes of state formation in the modern period' (Yeomans 2018: 276). Moreover, its significance is expressed in its contribution to the creation of state agencies, institutions, political participation and legislation:

in addition to providing finances for creating military and other agencies, taxation has profoundly affected state building in other ways. In order to collect taxes, political elites had to build administrative and enforcement apparatus... promulgate tax laws... and, in order to generate consent for taxation, create avenue of political participation, such as courts, prefectures, estates, and parliaments. (Campbell 1993: 177)

The development of state-levied taxation and its contribution to the process of state formation have various dimensions. One of these pertains to building bureaucratic, technological and institutional capacity, which allows states to levy tax effectively. Taxation not only presupposes this capacity, but also contributes to its development. Another dimension, as mentioned above, relates to providing peace and security, which demands resources: 'If states could not pay for coercive capacities, if they were unable to become the leviathans that Hobbes... insisted they ought to be, then they were unlikely to withstand internal and external existential threats' (Yeomans 2018: 276). Wars constitute the main drivers for states to introduce taxation (Tilly 1992). Corroborating this, Herbst (2000: 130) notes: 'Fighting wars may be the only way in which it is possible to have people pay more taxes and at the same time feel more closely associated with the state'.

The consent of taxpayers is also decisive for the eventual functionality and sustainability of the taxation system; coercion alone cannot hold for long. Therefore, scholars of state formation have diligently discussed incentives for taxpayers' consent (Moore 2004; Fjeldstad and Semboja 2001). What are the incentives for taxpayers' to give their consent? There are numerous reasons for paying taxes. Fjeldstad and Semboja (*ibid.*: 2060) identify three: coercion, fiscal exchange and social influence. The system of taxation stands at the heart of state-society relations. When citizens pay tax, they need to see dividends. In other words, reciprocity is needed, by which citizens pay tax and the state reciprocates by providing services. This is 'fiscal exchange, whereby taxation and the provision of public goods and services are interpreted as a contractual relationship between taxpayers and the (local) government' (*ibid.*). It is argued that absence of reciprocity engenders upheaval in the relationship:

the absence of direct taxes reduces the likelihood that citizens will be motivated to engage in politics through a sense of a right to influence the use of 'their' own money... the absence of political contestation over the raising of state revenue through taxation increases the space for conflict over more fundamental issues of morality and values that are more likely to generate permanent difference and ill-feeling among people, and less subject to compromise than are questions of who pays how much tax for what purpose. (Moore 2004: 307)

In the context of the state-society compact, it is often argued that taxing citizens renders the state more accountable and representative. This is because taxing citizens presupposes representation and participation of citizens in the polity, which is often an outcome of negotiations (*ibid.*). Effective taxation is also presumed to be an indication of state capacity and the state's level of penetration of society (Migdal 1988: 22). Highlighting this, Arbetman and Kugler (1997, cited in Araoye 2014: 62) write:

Taxes are exact indicators of governmental presence. Few operations of governments depend so heavily on popular support-or on fear of punishment. Revenues affect directly the lives of most individuals in society, and few activities are avoided so vigorously. Without some form of tax revenue, there is no national unity, and no control. Failure to impose and extract taxes is one of the essential indicators of governmental incapacity to obtain and maintain support.

Many African states suffer from a dearth of technological, organisational and institutional capacity to levy taxes. This not only denies the state crucial resources, but also has negative implications for state-society relations, as well as the legitimacy of the state. This underlines the incompleteness of the process of state formation on the continent.

The fifth function, the project of national cohesion or nation building, is present in all types of state formation. There is consensus in the literature on state formation that national cohesion is crucial for peace, stability and development. This has additional meaning in multiethnic, multilingual and multifaith societies. Unlike in Europe, where it is presumed that the nation constructed its own state, in Africa, the reverse is presumed to be the case: it is widely believed that the state is constructing the nation, from which derives the connotation of 'state-nation' (Smith 1983). The state as builder of the nation and principal organised actor in Africa assumes a privileged position. It bears the responsibility for transforming society and transitioning towards a cohesive community of sentiment. In transitional societies, as in the HOA, the role of the state as nation builder is of paramount importance. This is enhanced by the multiethnic, multicultural, multifaith and multilingual composition of societies. Highlighting this salient role of the state in Africa, scholars of state formation and nationalism, describe this as state nationalism. All typologies of state formation attempt to play this role; it is questionable how effective and successful they are.

Finally, the sixth function, conducting international relations, is one of the cardinal functions of the state. The 1648 Peace of Westphalia underpins the foundation of modern regulatory mechanisms that inform interstate relations (Araoye 2014; Osiander 2001). States are required to behave in a certain way. This confers upon the state predictability, respectability, integrity and accountability. Based on these qualities, states know the ethics, morality and characteristics that govern their interrelations. States that fail to abide by these rules are denounced as pariahs and barred from membership of the international club of states.

In conclusion, these six salient shared features define states' functional commonality. Nevertheless, states also display variation in the degree, scope, pace and efficacy of their implantation, practices and institutionalisation. The variance is a demonstration of level, origin, historical trajectory and development of the specific state.

CENTRIFUGAL AND CENTRIPETAL FORCES CONTESTING STATE FORMATION IN THE REGION

Whether proto-, colonial or national liberation state, the project of state formation in the HOA shares a common predicament; notably, societal fracturing. Primarily, fractures stem from the composition of society. They are also an indication of the unfulfilled process of nation and state formation. The political manifestation of societal fracturing in the HOA is represented by opposing political forces with centrifugal and centripetal tendencies. Hence, state formation is always characterised by contestation between a duality of political forces, reflecting the politically contested nature of state formation (Hagmann and Peclard 2011; Araoye 2014). This duality also represents centre/periphery territorial, political and power cleavages. While forces at the centre dominate state power, forces at the periphery remain marginalised, excluded and disadvantaged. The contested political terrain and sociopolitical arena underpinning societal reality constitute an indelible source of state fragility, crisis and instability, compounding the state of underdevelopment, poverty and associated social pathologies. The historical sociology of state formation, in all typologies, therefore, faces the imperative of tackling these challenges and predicaments.

Societal actors, depending on their socioeconomic and politico-cultural capital, and the position they hold in society, either push inwards towards the centre or outwards towards periphery. Centripetal forces tend to strongly stick together, holding the state together through self-identification with the state and affiliation with national objectives and symbols; for instance, in Ethiopia the Amharic language, Amhara culture and Orthodox Christianity have been rallying symbols for centripetal forces. However, centrifugal forces, which oppose those objectives and symbols, rally around the idea of dismantling the imperial state and instead invoke a more decentralised state structure and system that afford them equitable representation. The post-EPRDF political schism in Ethiopia, pitching ethnic federalists against civic nationalists can be conceptualised along the lines of centrifugal and centripetal political dichotomy, which accompanied the reform introduced in 2018. The phenomenon is not specific to Ethiopia. It is a common predicament throughout the region and across typologies of state formation.

At any given moment, the balance of power between centripetal and centrifugal forces determines the stability, functionality and representativity of the state. Centrifugal forces may aim to construct their own sovereign state within the territorial and ethnic bounds where they claim to have legitimate rights, or they will settle for an autonomy within the existing state. The mechanisms they seek to achieve those objectives have important implications for state formation. Moreover, the objectives and mechanisms also dictate the trajectory, routes, maturity and history of the historical sociology of state formation. Resolution of contestation between centrifugal and centripetal forces is a requirement for overall competent state formation.

The danger that contestation between centripetal and centrifugal forces presents to state formation is very much contingent on whether it is accompanied by violence or not. As much as centripetal forces see their interest preserved and protected by the central state, they see centrifugal forces as the enemy, who is endeavouring to break away. Conversely, centrifugal forces perceive the central state as the source of their oppression, exploitation and marginalisation, and thus, endeavour either to dismantle or overhaul it. The centripetal-centrifugal nexus could therefore be described as a relationship between dominator and dominated. In fractured multiethnic societies, contestation between centripetal and centrifugal forces is not only an indication of the precarity of state formation, but also stands at the centre of the rampant pathologies plaguing the HOA. One of these pathologies is identity-based conflict.

Centripetal/centrifugal struggles abound in the HOA. Proto-state formation in Ethiopia, since the 1960s at least, has been grappling with the question of identity, then known as the 'national question'. The student movement of the 1960s and leftist parties of the 1970s challenged the conception of the Ethiopian state as the real representative of the nations and nationalities composing Ethiopian society (Kebede 2008; Zewde 2010; Tareke 1996), which led to the uprising of 1974 and fall of the monarchy. The military junta that succeeded the emperor also failed to address the question of nations and nationalities. Consequently, various ethnic nationalist insurgencies and centrifugal forces fought the state to remedy the centrifugal/centripetal schism. Oromos, Somalis, Tigrayans, Sidamas, Benishanguls, Afars, etc., fought the central state, aspiring to either secession or self-rule.

Sudan has also had its share of centrifugal insurgencies since the inception of independence in 1956, targeting the legitimacy of the central state.

The colonially assembled territoriality came under enormous pressure as its postcolonial capacity to survive was constantly tested and interrogated. Multiple subnational endogenous and exogenous global actors and forces challenged the state formation process. The south Sudanese, afraid of domination by the north, sparked a rebellion on the eve of independence in 1955 (Johnson 2011; Deng 2010; Fluehr-Lobban 2012; Roiandsen 2005). It developed into a full-fledged internecine war and was brought to an end through a peace accord brokered by Ethiopia in 1972. Another south Sudanese rebellion occurred in 1983, which lasted for 22 years and ended with the secession of South Sudan (Young 2012). The centrifugal challenges were not limited to the south; the rebellion also spread to Beja region in eastern Sudan, Darfur, the Nuba mountains and the Blue Nile. These centrifugal insurgencies have rendered the state formation project in Sudan highly precarious, ultimately leading to the division of the country.

SPLM/Dinka (centripetal) domination of post-liberation South Sudan spurred a (centrifugal) rebellion that challenged the legitimacy of the Dinka-dominated, SPLM-led state. Minorities that felt marginalised, excluded and alienated rebelled against the nascent state. In Eritrea, too, the post-liberation state was dominated by the EPLF, which excluded those who had not been liberators or were not EPLF members, consequently provoking resentment and politically centrifugal sentiments. Tiny Djibouti has its share of excluded minorities and centrifugal forces; the Afars have conducted an intermittent armed struggle against domination by the Issa majority since independence in 1977.

The contestation between centrifugal and centripetal politics and forces is one of the central problems encountered by the historical sociology of state formation in the HOA. Proto-, colonial and national liberation states share this negative commonality. Their common characteristics bear testimony to the immaturity of the state in the HOA, as well as the absence both of the emancipation of the state and the pacification of society.

CONCLUSION

This chapter set out to analyse common characteristics that define states. Variations in the historical routes and processes, ontological pedigree and level of maturity, and model and evolution of state formation may give rise to differences in the structures, institutionalisation, performance, legitimacy, representation, penetration and popularity of the state. They also

demonstrate the level of state emancipation and societal pacification as a benchmark of the historical sociology of state formation. The three models of state formation depicted in this book manifestly illustrate the problems encountered. In spite of the differences highlighted, however, there are basic features that united states. Unity is expressed in functions states are supposed to fulfil. They are the *raison d'être* for the existence of a state.

All states are expected to fulfil some basic functions, invariably identified as providing socioeconomic services, maintaining peace and security, securing territorial integrity, generating revenue, engendering national cohesion and conducting international relations. In terms of the last, a state must earn international recognition and legitimacy, often described as the Westphalian effect, thereby gaining full membership in the global club of states. Membership of this club of states also puts demands on the state to fulfil certain functions and thereby contribute to the global state order, which is defined by and reflects mutual reciprocity and reaffirmation; when these are disrupted, the global state order is plunged into crisis. The common functions that afford a state recognition and legitimacy have two dimensions: internal and external. While the former constitutes the internal, the latter constitutes the external.

With respect to state formation in the HOA, while the positive functions represent a common denominator or characteristic features, state formation in the HOA is also riven by political contestation between centripetal and centrifugal forces, which is a negative aspect of commonality. All the HOA states are plagued by conflicts generated by rivalry between these opposing forces. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that, contrary to the claim by some that the Western model of state formation is inapplicable to Africa, the centrifugal/centripetal contestation is a historical manifestation of societies in transition, epitomising the challenges of ongoing state formation, where subnational and national identities compete for pre-eminence as components and transient phenomena.

State-society relations, in their modern sense, are characterised by mutuality and reciprocity, as alluded to throughout this book, expressed in the state providing services to society while society confers legitimacy upon the state. Service provision as the cornerstone of state legitimacy gains popular consent, by which the state earns citizens' trust and recognition. The three modalities of state formation expounded in this work share those characteristics with each other, as well as with other states in the global state system.

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Conclusion

INTRODUCTION

State formation is the most contested subject in social and political sciences. The contestation is particularly intense when it comes to Africa. The contestation pivots around concepts, theory, methodology as well as empiri. Throughout postcolonial period the debate of whether the entities in Africa qualify the connotation of state and statehood engaged social scientists in general and students of state formation in particular. It has been a long held perception that tribal societies could not form a political organisation, [nation] state. Even the dichotomy between state formation and state building comprised part of the contestation. At the root of the contestation stands the Euro-centric origin of the state. Many scholars hold the view that the European model of state formation irreplaceable to other historico-societal settings. This book, however, while accepting the perception that experiences of other societies could not be completely copied and indigenous institutions, structures, authorities, mechanisms and dynamics are important, yet there are two aspects that we need to keep in mind. These are: firstly, colonialism has grafted elements into the social fabric of colonised societies, which has been proved impossible to extricate and discard. Secondly, in human development, societal formation and transformation, as the theoretical chapter attempted to demonstrate, there are patterns that are common to humanity in general. This book, therefore, without underplaying the differences stresses the

need of striking balance. The strength of the book is in attempting to bridge the gap, a gap prevailing between precolonial legacy on the one hand, and colonial one on the other.

This concluding chapter intends to bring out the similarities and differences of the three typologies of state formation in the HOA in a more systematic and logical manner. Moreover, through recapitulating the central arguments of the typologies, it will provide highlights and a summary of the book. The book addresses three typologies or models of state formation. The first pertains to a 'natural', evolutionary, indigenous state formation model, the proto-state; the second to a colonially spawned, externally imposed and transplanted state formation model; and the third to a national liberation state formation model. In a methodological historicisation and periodisation, we might propose a sequentiality of formation. Therefore, the proto-state would come first, followed by the colonial state, with the national liberation state last. In addition to temporality, the theoretical and empirical foundation for the sequential arrangement is related to the actors and structures involved in the state formation process, which vary fundamentally. This work concerns the historical sociology of state formation. As such, it does not indulge in historical accounts and details of particular cases or countries. It rather focuses on the theoretical and analytical models of the three.

The central theme the book seeks to address is to identify similarities and differences between the three models of the historical sociology of state formation in the HOA. Moreover, it interrogates the rationality behind each of the three models. The difference is self-evident as represented by the actors and structures involved in the formation and historical trajectories of the state. Generally speaking, internal indigenous actors and corresponding structures define proto-state formation. Of course, this does not mean external influence did not have an impact. Abyssinia (later Ethiopia) was very much involved diplomatically, politically, economically and militarily with the external world that shaped its state formation process. Politico-diplomatic relations, particularly with Europe, conferred international prestige and weight upon the Abyssinian state as far back as the Middle Ages (cf. Levine 2000; Marcus 2002; Rubenson 1978; Markakis 1974; Ullendorff 1973). This prestige might have contributed to Portugal's support for Christian Abyssinia in the fifteenth century in a war against Muslim enemies. Indeed, Portugal's involvement determined the survival of the Abyssinian state. This is a clear indication of the role of external actors, even in the proto-state formation.

The structures and actors that determined the colonial state formation were primarily European. Even here, the role of the colonised people, and whether they were passive objects or active subjects who participated in the making of colonial state, is hotly debated. Bayart (2009) is one of the scholars who contends that Africans actively participated in the historical sociology of colonial state formation:

In point of fact, there were many Africans who adhered with the greatest sincerity to the lifestyles which colonialism both offered to and imposed on them. To deny the attractive aspect to these new lifestyles would [be] tantamount to renouncing any possibility of understanding how European occupation was able to last as long as it did, with, in most instances, such pathetically small military and administrative resources. To deny that, many Africans adopted new styles of life quite willingly would also imply that the collaboration of large swathes of African local elites was due to the purest self-interest or complete alienation. (ibid.: xlix)

The pitfall with this kind of conceptualisation of willing collaboration of Africans with the colonial authorities is that it has the effect of absolving colonial authorities from the heinous crimes, abuses, mischiefs and manipulations they committed in the process of colonising Africans. A small elite group wittingly or unwittingly for narrow interest and small benefit might have collaborated with colonial powers in the enslavement of their people. The majority were not part of the scheme they rather were victims.

These converts of the new lifestyle or collaborators, to paraphrase Marx, did not participate in the postcolonial state formation on their own terms; or to cite the famous Fanonian phrase, they simply assumed the role or represented the emergence of the role of ‘black skin, white masks’ (Fanon 2008), what Ekeh (1975) designated as the emergence of two publics, which burdened the postcolonial state formation. This, indeed, was the underpinning factor for what some scholars describe as the deformity of the state through the creation of a fractured society, institutional duality and weak governance (Kaplan 2009; Sklar 2005; Englebert 2005). In other words, the parasitic class of compradors that was created by or mushroomed under the colonial regime bears the responsibility for the messy postcolonial historical sociology of state formation.

The struggle for decolonisation and consequent construction of the postcolonial nationalist state assumed a simultaneous act of destruction and construction—destruction of colonial structures and actors

and construction of national structures and actors. How effective this simultaneity has been is an empirical question. Colonial domination, coupled with resistance to external domination, shaped the colonial state formation process. National liberation state formation, particularly in the Eritrean case, assumed a double objective. One objective entailed completing the historical decolonisation process that was denied to the Eritrean people; the other concerned defeating annexation and occupation as a prelude to the historical sociology of national liberation state formation.

National liberation, in its dual meaning, involved liberation and state formation. Driven by national liberation ideology, national liberation state formation embarks on two solemn tasks of liberation and post-liberation nation building. The coalescence of nation building and state building as component elements of the overriding historical sociology of state formation assumes an overarching, continuous societal transformation in all models of state formation. The post-liberation state formation is a continuation of the liberation-era political culture in the sense it derives from the same culture and ideology, particularly in the Eritrean case, as the postcolonial state formation could also be perceived as the continuation of the colonial state formation.

Nonetheless, the end product of the three models of state formation falls into the same—or a similar—category of state structure, nature and function. Moreover, in some cases there is transcendence. In the case of Ethiopia, for example, the proto-state went through a reconfiguration of state formation that was driven by a national liberation movement. It is also noteworthy to recall the significance of five years of Italian occupation, particularly with regard to Ethiopia's modernisation endeavour. While Somaliland exemplifies a metamorphosis from unionist state formation to national liberation state formation, Eritrea illustrates a case of annexation state formation and national liberation state formation transcending colonial state formation. The peculiarity of the three typologies is briefly summarised in the following sections.

The chapter consists of eight sections: following section analyses the proto-state; section “[Colonial State Formation](#)” discusses the creation of the colonial state; section “[Annexation and Voluntary Union as Deconstruction and Construction of State Formation](#)” analyses cases of annexation and voluntary union as deconstruction and construction of state; section “[Institutionalisation](#)” discusses institutionalisation; section

“State Legitimacy” analyses state legitimacy; and section “Globalisation Versus the Viability of the Western State Model”, globalisation versus unviability. Section “Conclusion” provides concluding remarks.

PROTO-STATE FORMATION

The dominant discourse of the formation of the modern state in Africa is predicated on the contention of the state’s imposition, imitation, fabrication and exportation (cf. Markakis et al. 2021; Badie 2000; Englebert 2000; Bayart 2009; Young 1994; Migdal 1988; Tilly 1975). This contention derives from the fact that the contemporary African state is a colonial construction. Structures, institutions and praxes continue long after colonialism has gone. These mechanisms of state formation are deemed to lead to failure, distortion, fragility and even collapse. This situation in turn presents the primary source of conflicts and wars on the African continent. Alternatively, it is frequently purported that the remedy lies in seeking indigenous mechanisms, institutions, practices and authorities (Davidson 1992; Markakis et al. 2021). This book, however, unlike the contention of getting rid of colonial heritage, promotes the idea of striking a balance between the dual precolonial and colonial legacies.

There is an exception to the purported ontological origin of the state in Africa. Ethiopia is widely perceived as the exception to the externally driven mechanisms of state formation and is deemed to represent an alternative model of state formation to that of colonialism. The evolution of proto-state formation in Ethiopia, however, does not manifest behaviours, practices, relations, institutions and structures so radically different from those of the colonial and postcolonial state, adding credence to the postulation that all states display common functions, practices and ethos. As early as the eighteenth century, the Abyssinian proto-state was very much integrated with Western powers through exchanges of diplomatic and military technology. Western experts were recruited as advisors to kings and emperors; the country joined the League of Nations; Ethiopians were sent to Europe to receive a Western education. All this have had veritable influence on the functions, behaviours and ethos of the proto-state. Of course, agents of state formation and corresponding structures were indigenes.

When we consider Western influence on proto-state formation, it is of great importance to take note that there may be two explanations. The first could be constant diplomatic engagement with the external world

and concomitant influences. The second could be continuous modernisation along the Western model of state formation, leading to imitation of Western models. One such apparent attempt at modernisation was the importation of modern war technology. The Emperor Haile Selassie's modernisation project and the military-Marxist state reconfiguration as a socialist state is illustrative of the intensive and continuous remaking of the proto-state.

Ethiopia is commonly perceived as unique in a double sense. In the first sense, Ethiopia evaded colonisation and survived as the only country in Africa that outmanoeuvred European imperial powers. Indeed, it made history by defeating a European power bent on conquering it (Clapham 2017: 31). Conversely, Abyssinia was itself involved in colonising others. In the second sense, Ethiopia is also unique in that it claims to be the oldest state in Africa, whose statehood has existed continuously for thousands of years. Nevertheless, Ethiopia is characterised by unceasing state reconfiguration, just like any African country demonstrating an incomplete and immature state formation process.

The proto-state also displays all the symptoms, pathologies and failures of its counterpart, the colonial/postcolonial state. Ethiopia has gone through a military coup d'état and dictatorship, ethnic conflicts and insurgencies, single-party dictatorship, droughts and famine, underdevelopment and poverty, youth unemployment and migration, state fragility, secessionism and more (Gedamu 2022; Kebede 2008; Markakis 2011; Ottaway and Ottaway 1978; Tareke 2009; Lyons 2019). This raises the question of whether proto-state formation and postcolonial state formation make a significant difference in the overall behaviour and performance of the state. In other words, do all states behave in the same way? Throughout its formation trajectories, the representativeness (of all ethnic groups) of the Ethiopian proto-state has been contested (Gudina 2003; Keller 2014).

It is perceived as the representative of certain dominant group(s), but not always the demographically dominant one. The specific identity representation of the proto-state generated centrifugal forces that challenged the legitimacy and very existence of the central state. The expansion of the highland, Abyssinian state southwards, at the same time as European imperialism was engaging in the scramble for Africa, produced a multiethnic imperial state (Zewde 2001; Bulcha 2002; Gudina 2003; Markakis 2011; Tareke 2009). This multiethnic composition gave rise to

the connotation of a prison of nations (Tareke 2009: 31). This description was intended to explain the unequal power relations between the different ethnic groups, where the majority were denied any sort of rights. Their unequal existence spurred identity-based conflicts. Since the 1960s, ethnically driven conflicts and power contestations have afflicted the country, threatening its unity and integrity. These identity-based conflicts contributed to the fall of monarchy in 1974. The military regime that replaced the monarchy, the Dergue, did not succeed in addressing the conflicts. Their continuation generated ethnic nationalist movements that rebelled against the military dictatorship. A coalition of ethnic nationalist rebel movements finally deposed the military regime in 1991.

The ethnic nationalist movements that ascended to state power embarked on a reconfiguration of the state along lines they thought would address perennial ethnic grievances. This produced ethnic federalism that led to a reconfiguration of the state based on ethno-territorial identity affiliations. This ethnic federalist state reconfiguration could not provide a solution to the complicated and multifaceted state formation problem in Ethiopia either (Kefale 2013; Gedamu 2022). After 30 years experimenting with ethnic federalism, Ethiopia in 2020 arrived at a moment of deadly political rupture. By 2022, it found itself at a crossroads between two conceptions of state formation, notably an ethnic federalist state dispensation and a civic identity-based one.

COLONIAL STATE FORMATION

The second model of state formation alluded to in this book is based on colonial creation. At the Berlin Conference of 1884–1885, the European powers executed their plan to partition the African continent among themselves. This is the commonly entrenched conception of the colonial creation of states in Africa. This epistemic and ontological foundation for the construction of the state in Africa still reigns supreme. This, evidently, historical misfortune of construction of the state in Africa is not only credited with dividing up the societies of the HOA as the property of colonial powers, but also shaped the contours of conflicts, wars, territorial disputes, irredentism and identity claims and counter-claims that continue to devastate the region up to the present day (Markakis et al. 2021). Britain, France and Italy partitioned the HOA in their attempt to introduce colonial states. The scramble left Britain with Sudan and British Somaliland, France with French Somaliland (present-day Djibouti); and

Italy with Eritrea and Italian Somaliland. The correct description would be that these colonial powers awarded themselves enormous areas of land. In this way, the colonial possessions morphed into colonial states.

This colonial construction of the state's ensured the division of communities, placing them on opposite sides of the emerging colonial states' international borders, which sowed the seeds of future conflicts. The Somalis were the most visible case of the reckless division of communities. They were scattered across the colonial possessions of British Somaliland, British Kenya, French Somaliland, Italian Somaliland and Ethiopian Somalia. This division gave rise to pan-Somali dreams, ambitions and movements in the postcolonial era that pitched the Republic of Somalia against all its neighbours. The Afars were another nation that was visibly divided between three states, which led to the dream of pan-Afar statehood. Many other peoples also found themselves scattered along and across colonial international boundaries.

The colonial scheme of reckless division of communities (nations) has had a lasting impact on the process of postcolonial state formation. Territory, identity, socioeconomic mode of life and topography are important ingredients in constructing a functioning and sustainable state. They can either facilitate or impede the process. Well-defined and compartmentalised territory can facilitate clearly delineated identity formation, which in turn generates organic state-society relations. The dichotomy of pastoral/nomadic versus farming/sedentary socioeconomic modes of life—a societal cleavage incorporated within the territorial identity space—impedes societal cohesion, rendering state formation precarious. The postcolonial state, as a continuation of the colonial state is not able to extricate or liberate itself from its predecessor. In many aspects, the colonial and postcolonial state act as conjoined twins, perpetuating a common structural identity, albeit with different actors.

One of the outcomes of the fragmentation of communities in the HOA is the prevalence of pervasive centrifugal forces challenging the existence and functionality of the central state. The pervasiveness of forces that challenge the central state underpins the festering conflicts, state crises, underdevelopment, poverty and democratic deficiency. The legacy of the colonial creation of the state is evident in the deformity of the structure of the state, institutional duality, state-society mismatches and tenuous legitimacy. Most importantly, the transition from colonial to postcolonial state that accommodates societal contexts, realities and the dual legacies

(precolonial and colonial) is in a process of gestation that will take generations and explains the condition of states in the HOA. As Bayart (2009: 33), citing Georges Baladier notes, ‘the present situation of African societies was the result of a triple history which has “drawn together its constituent parts” – precolonial, colonial and postcolonial history’. This constitutes a response to those who advocate and propose that Africa should rid itself of the colonial state. The ‘triple history’, a triple legacy, is the heritage of today’s Africa, which should learn how to manage it.

ANNEXATION AND VOLUNTARY UNION AS DECONSTRUCTION AND CONSTRUCTION OF STATE FORMATION

The principle of decolonisation and self-determination allowed people subjected to European domination to establish their own sovereign states. However, some were denied that right. In such cases, annexation substituted decolonisation. In the HOA, we observe two cases of colonial state formation, Eritrea and Somaliland, which had diverging outcomes. Somaliland went through the decolonisation process, exercising its right to self-determination. Consequently, Somaliland won its sovereignty from British rule on 26 June 1960. Four days later, it voluntarily abdicated its independence and joined Italian Somaliland, which had just gained its own independence, to form the Republic of Somalia on 1 July 1960 (Walls 2014; Elmi 2010; Ismail 2010). Postcolonial state formation, therefore, proceeded in Somalia, constituting two colonial territories. This part of the history of Somaliland could be describe as a union state formation.

Soon, however, the people of Somaliland realised that their representation and participation in the postcolonial union state formation of the Republic of Somalia was not based on equality and mutuality of interests. Their resentment soon transformed into political resistance. The Siad Barre government responded heavy-handedly to Somaliland’s grievances, exacerbating the situation. When it became clear that the cleavage could not be resolved by peaceful means, Somaliland resorted to armed resistance, which resulted in the collapse of the Somali state. In the wake of the collapse, Somaliland withdrew from the union and unilaterally declared its sovereignty in 1991. Since then, it has been involved in a process of de facto state formation. Many perceive the case of Somaliland as fulfilling all

the necessary ingredients of empirical or de facto sovereignty, but lacking *de jure* sovereignty. In principle, the exercise of self-determination is supposed to lead to three scenarios: independence, autonomy or union. In 1960, Somaliland chose union with Italian Somaliland, which produced the Republic of Somalia.

Eritrea, a creation of colonialism identical to the case of Somaliland, was compelled to take a different historical trajectory. In the wake of Italian colonialism, Eritrea was tied to Ethiopia through a UN-sponsored federation dictated by geopolitics. Eritreans see this as aborted decolonisation and a denial of the exercise of their right to self-determination. The federation was aborted in less than ten years and annexation occurred, whereby Eritrea was transformed into a province. The violation of the federal status sparked a 30-year liberation struggle that ended in 1991 with the victory of the Eritreans. Independence commenced the post-liberation state formation. Ideologically and culturally, the post-liberation state formation is a continuation of the national liberation state formation. In other words, the genesis of national liberation state formation begins in the pre-liberation period and continues into the post-liberation period.

The lesson to be drawn from the cases of Somaliland and Eritrea is how the same subjection to European colonisation had two different outcomes. One was allowed to consummate the right to decolonisation and self-determination, while the other was denied the same right. Moreover, following a popular referendum on its sovereign national liberation state formation, while Eritrea received *de jure* international recognition, Somaliland's quest for the same recognition has been repudiated. This complexity of history demonstrates the unique nature of the HOA region, which also explains the variable models of the historical sociology of state formation.

Deconstruction and construction are parallel processes deployed by nationalist forces as mechanisms of state formation. This is particularly true of national liberation state formation. Both Somaliland and Eritrea embarked on simultaneous deconstruction and construction in the process of nation formation. Somaliland needed a clean break from Somalia. Any elements that tied it to Somalia had to be deconstructed. Instead, it had to build a separate identity narrative that would serve its quest for sovereign statehood. Even in terms of language, people in Somaliland made great efforts to demonstrate to the world that the Somali language spoken in Somaliland was different from that spoken in the rest

of Somalia. In a similar manner, Eritreans embarked on deconstructing the narratives and discourses of claims that bound them to Ethiopia historically. Conversely, they engaged in the construction of their own narrative and discourse, which shored up the legitimacy of sovereign state formation.

The historical sociology of state formation in Somaliland and Eritrea, national liberation state formation, clearly and unambiguously elucidated the non-linearity of state formation, with all its ups and downs, back and forth and messy processes.

INSTITUTIONALISATION

The discourse of state formation is primarily informed by two contending conceptions. These are functionalist and institutional approaches. The functionalist approach defines the state as stemming from its core functions. In other words, the *raison d'être* for the prevalence of the state is perceived to be the performance of central functions. In other words, the functionalist school differentiates between minimalist and maximalist approaches. The minimalist approach subscribes to limited functions such as security, law and order and protection of private property. The maximalist approach, on the other hand, in addition to performing minimal functions, contends that the state should also involve itself in the provision of general welfare, thus the welfare state.

The minimalist versus maximalist approaches gave rise to two conceptions of the state, the liberal state (minimalist) and the welfare state (maximalist). In these conceptions, the existence of the state is rationalised according to the functions it provides. Whereas the functionalist approach sees the parameters of the range, scope and degree of functions as defining the features of state, the institutionalist approach defines a state as an institutional edifice. In other words, the state is an institution *par excellence*. The component elements of the state as an institution may include executive, legislative and judicial branches, and local and national organs. In addition, it is possible to differentiate between general/abstract and concrete/tangible aspects. The first set depicts the institutional aspect, while the latter refers to the ministries, branches, administration and bureaucracies, buildings, flag, national symbols, etc.

In the classical sociology of the structural-functionalist approach, both radical and conservative traditions see the state as a construct of structures and functions. Both Marx and Durkheim described the two traditions

of structural-functionalist theories from different perspectives. Whereas for Marx, materially derived structures and functions underpinned state formation (Marx and Engels 2006), for Durkheim, ideas and culture were the underpinning factors.

The structural-functionalist approach:

treats society as a set of interdependent systems. The theory rests on organic analogy that likens a social system to a physical body, in which each subsystem is necessary to main the proper functioning of the entire organism. From a functionalist point of view, the key to understanding a social subsystem is to trace its function in the working of the whole. (Calhoun et al. 2002: 341)

In this sense, a state's functionality is interpreted based on the services it provides to society and its capacity to deliver basic provisions.

Societies in the HOA are in a transitional phase. They contain multiple institutional edifices. The mainstay of these multiple institutions are often described as simultaneously modern and traditional ones. Colonial intervention engendered dual institutional legacies, the precolonial and the colonial or formal and informal. Those institutions presented as informal in the colonial and postcolonial periods were arguably perceived to be formal in the precolonial period (Ekeh 1983; Englebert 2005; Herbst 2000). The so-called informal institutions are the ones that supposedly cater to the overwhelmingly rural majority population (cf. Ekeh 1975; Mamdani 1996). The challenge the contemporary states in the HOA encounter is therefore how to strike a balance between the two legacies (Bereketeab 2011).

Therefore, in terms of institutionalisation—the state as institutional edifice—it implies three things: (1) setting up modern institutions; (2) accommodating traditional institutions; and (3) transcending a revolutionary national liberation political culture and forging one of civic governance. A balance is required between the first two. Institutionalisation, therefore, fulfils two central purposes. First, in terms of the state as an institution, it means constructing the state itself. Second, institutionalisation accomplishes depersonalisation, transparency and accountability in governance and state performance. Moreover, it is argued that institutionalisation is also approached from the angle that: 'First, institutions constrain individuals from being driven by greed and not pursuing the common good. And second, institutions protect and nurture peoples'

intrinsic motivation, which includes their engaging in civic responsibilities and their willingness to trust and be trustworthy' (Wiafe-Amoako 2016: 7).

STATE LEGITIMACY

State legitimacy is one of the most hotly debated and contested issues in African studies, in particular, and social sciences with a focus on Africa, in general: 'the nature of the African nation state is at the heart of the issue of the legitimacy of its institutions, politics, and government' (*ibid.*: 78). According to the literature, state legitimacy emanates from three sources: its origin, service delivery and cultural embeddedness. The variability of sources determines and shapes the forms, contexts and structures of state legitimacy. Origin is associated with the conception, evolution, consolidation and performance of the typology of state formation. More concretely, it refers to whether the state grounds its manner and context of emergence in endogenously or exogenously. In other words, whether it is the result of the metamorphosis of internal processes and mechanisms dictated by domestic actors and structures or is imposed by external actors and structures. The functionality and sustainability of state institutions and structures is very much influenced by the interiority or exteriority of state formation.

The proto-state as interiority-driven state formation bases its legitimacy on variables and mechanisms developed internally. The feudal state formation derives legitimacy more or less from traditional forms of authority. The monarchy in Ethiopia claimed its authority emanated from divine sources. The monarch's subjects were expected to obediently submit to the divine source of his authority. Questioning the authority of the king amounted to questioning his divinity, which in turn would mean committing a sacrilegious act and leading to damnation. This profanity as a religious act was the highest degree of sin, depriving the sinner of the promise of the kingdom of heaven:

Religion also provided the ideology and legitimacy of the state. Christianity was a pillar of the imperial dynasty, having provided it with a founding legend that joined faith, nation and throne in an indissoluble union with a mythical past and a prophetic future. The power of 'the Elect of God' – one of the emperor's many titles – came from God, therefore it was unlimited, unaccountable and unchallengeable, and its absolute nature

was graphically depicted in many proverbs: ‘When the King commands it, one is not allowed to bury one’s own mother’, and when asked to stop in the name of the King, water stops flowing’. (Markakis 2011: 33–34)

Service delivery, as a source of state legitimacy, explicates the frequencies, scope, forms and contexts in which the state delivers basic services. The type of services varies from limited selective service provision to wide and expansive service provision. The scope and frequency of service provision is determined and regulated by the form of the state: liberal state versus welfare state. The liberal state limits itself to providing only essential services, while other forms of service provision—such as basic social services—are left for the market and private actors to take care of. The (social democratic) welfare state, however, takes it upon itself to provide elaborate and expansive public services. The extent of public service provision is also dictated by the magnitude of tax levying as a source of state revenue and equitable social distribution of national resources. While the liberal state tends to levy low taxes, the welfare state usually puts a high premium on tax revenue. The reciprocity of tax levying and service provision, then, defines the legitimacy of the state.

Sociocultural embeddedness is another variable that explains and enhances the nature and level of state legitimacy. This concerns the extent to which the state springs from and genuinely represents its constituency. Of the three typologies of state formation this book deals with, for obvious reasons the colonial state fails to fulfil this criterion of legitimacy. Generally speaking: ‘Legitimacy creates an environment of acceptance, satisfaction, and ultimately stability... In politics, the term “legitimacy” connotes the popular acceptance of the system that created the governing authority and/or regime and its laws’ (Wiafe-Amoako 2016: 76).

Based on the three sources of legitimacy, we can therefore discern the varieties of forms of legitimacy of the three typologies of state formation treated in this work. While the proto-state invokes legitimacy from tradition and the historicity of the *longue durée*, the colonial/postcolonial state invokes colonial territoriality, and the national liberation state invokes revolutionary performance as the source of its legitimacy.

GLOBALISATION VERSUS THE VIABILITY OF THE WESTERN STATE MODEL

The discourse on and narrative of state formation in Africa are imbued with two competing paradigms. On the one hand, we have globalisation and on the other the non-viability of the Western state model in Africa (cf. Davidson 1992; Markakis et al. 2021). The globalisation paradigm rests on the assumption that the world is closely interconnected—thus the axiom of the ‘global village’—and contends that we are in a post-Westphalian era, whose foundational cornerstone is interstate relations based on equality, sovereignty and the internal integrity of states irrespective of size, power or wealth (Araoye 2014; Osiander 2001; Watson 1990).

All these features of state sovereignty are eroded under the dominant post-Westphalian globalisation. The post-Westphalian era is characterised by a situation where the post-nation state reigns supreme. The nation state is undermined by local and subnational actors from below, while from above it is challenged by international actors, donors, international economic institutions and organisations (e.g. the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, World Trade Organization, International Labour Organization, etc.) (Mendes 2000: 120). According to this conception, the state can no longer claim to have absolute territorial sovereignty and integrity. International organisations, institutions and actors have the legitimate right to interfere in what used to be the sole domestic sovereignty and authority of the state. A clear manifestation of this is the interventionist R2P doctrine adopted by the UN in 2005 (Pattison 2021).

The globalisation paradigm is shrouded in notions such as the post-nation state, post-modernity and post-sovereignty. The global space is perceived to have been opened so wide that national identities, borders and sovereignty are rendered irrelevant. Hence, it is argued:

states will come to function less as ‘sovereign’ entities and more as the components of an international ‘polity’. The central functions of the nation state will become those of providing legitimacy for and ensuring the accountability of supra-national and sub-national governance mechanisms. (Hirst and Thompson 1996: 171)

The state is simply relegated to a position where it performs limited functions akin to the minimalist school; as Hirst and Thompson (ibid.: 175) argue, 'it has now become fashionable to assert that the era of the nation state is over, and that national-level governance is ineffective in the face of globalized economic and political process'. Moreover, they maintain that scholars such as Ohmae see nation states 'to have become the local authorities of the global system' (ibid.: 176). This presupposes the existence of supranational, international states that subsume national states as provincial entities. The subnational refers to states sharing authority with societal groups within the territorial bounds over which the states claim to have sovereignty, while the supranational refers to international actors and entities (e.g. donors, the UN, humanitarian organisations, transnational market actors, etc.) that interfere in what is usually delineated as the internal sphere. Under the notion of globalisation, the state is simply conceived of as an integrated part of the international global system. As such, there is no need for the existence of a sovereign, exclusive national state; it has no function.

The minimalist functioning of the state may work in developed Western states where society and other societal sectors are mature and strong. In Africa, however, where society is still undergoing a process of formation and transformation, the role of the state is decisive in a process that demands maximalist functions. The state is the only overarching organised political force with the capacity to deal with the multifaceted problems societies face.

The other side of the discourse, the non-viability of the Western state model in Africa, however, advocates for Africans to abandon this model, go back to their roots and find their own way. The assumption is that the contemporary African state, instead of constituting part of the global system of states, is perceived as unusual and aberrant, and ought to reconstitute itself according to its own historical, cultural, socio-political roots, norms and values. This means Africa should seek out precolonial institutional, structural, cultural, social and historical norms, values, belief systems, ethics and ethos in constructing postcolonial states. A condensed illustration of the diminished relevance of the European model of state formation to Africa is to be found in *The Black Man's Burden: Africa and the Curse of the Nation-state* (Davidson 1992). This rejects the premise or the notion of whatever globalisation and the global village represents.

What this paradigm ignores or fails to grasp is that postcolonial African societies are by definition dual-legacy entities. They conflate two heritages and balancing them requires setting up the process of state formation in a manner that fits and accommodates their specific realities and contexts. In other words, state formation in Africa in general and the HOA in particular ought to adjust to the dual-legacy reality.

The globalisation discourse that rejects the existence of the nation state, advocating the reality of the post-nation state, on the one hand, and the viability or non-viability of the European state model, which advocates that Africa look for its own state models, on the other, represents the contradiction prevailing in the literature on state formation today. Both perspectives fail to capture the reality in Africa.

CONCLUSION

This chapter, through recapping the central themes, intentions and arguments of the book, has sought to provide a succinct conclusion. Accordingly, it briefly discussed the three models of state in the HOA, questions of institutionalisation and legitimacy, and the state in the age of globalisation. The work has also highlighted the unique nature of the HOA, necessitating three models to describe the historical sociology of state formation in the region. The aim of the book is not to indulge in the historicity of countries, but rather to focus on the models as explanatory instruments of the historical sociology of state formation in the HOA, often described by conditions of crisis, fragility, collapse, democratic deficiency, exclusion, marginalisation, lack of representativeness, etc. Moreover, these conditions are attributed to the origin, trajectory, nature and structure of the state. In turn, out of this arises the conviction that the Western state model is not viable in Africa. The thesis of non-viability, however, fails to provide a credible alternative and contradicts the notion of globalisation as an integrative and homogenising world order that will create a global village.

States across the world demonstrate variations. Even within the so-called European model, considerable variation exists in state systems (monarchical, presidential, parliamentary, liberal democratic, authoritarian, etc.). It is also of great concern whether the state is in a mono- or multiethnic context. In most multiethnic societies centrifugal political forces seek to break away, as the cases of Belgium, Spain and UK illustrate. Concerning the three models, the object of this book, as this work

has demonstrated, the models also evince variability. Nevertheless, there are fundamental characteristics common to all states. These include their provision of security, territorial integrity, national unity, socioeconomic development and diplomatic and international respect and recognition.

State structures, institutions and institutionalisation, governance capacity, democratic credentials, representativity, level and capacity of social service provision, diplomacy and international relations, adherence to universal civic and human rights principles, constitutionalism and rule of law, etc., are highly contingent on history, culture and experience, regional, ethnic, linguistic and societal settings and state gestation. Specificities, contexts, structures, norms, values and realities matter.

The discourse of the non-viability of the Western model of state formation in Africa not only forgets and ignores the lasting legacy of colonialism, but is also increasingly becoming unfruitful. A productive approach would then be how to balance the dual legacy, and seek out routes, models and mechanisms that take into consideration the specificities, peculiarities and realities of every African society. The central argument this book aims to advance is that the complex pathologies ravaging the HOA can be explained by the incompleteness of the process of state formation. State formation is a continuous process defined by fluidity and malleability. The state is *par excellence* a war maker as much as a peacemaker. As the main political organisation, the state plays a decisive role in societal construction. Therefore, the objectives and successive and proper completion of the process of state formation in the HOA should contribute to resolving the multifaceted and festering problems that plague the region.

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